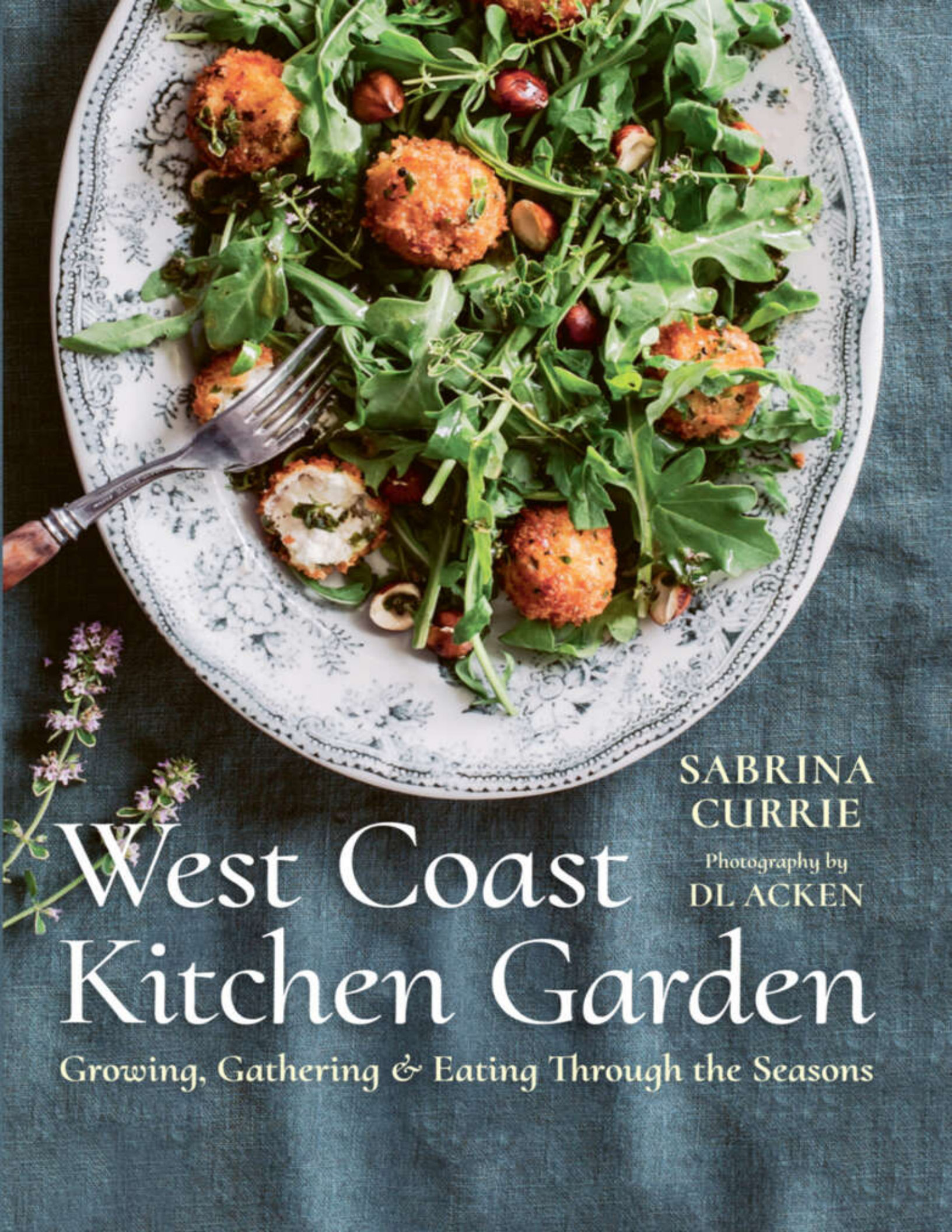

SABRINA CURRIE

West Coast Kitchen Garden

Photography by DL ACKEN

Growing, Gathering & Eating Through the Seasons

West Coast Kitchen Garden

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TOUCHWOOD

To my four wonderful children. William, Olivia, Owen, and Oceanna, you are what has made our blended family special. Each of you has inspired me in different ways and I love you very much. Keep following your dreams.

To my parents, Ken and Debbie Menzies, and my brother Doug, who have always had my back and cheered me on no matter what. I am so thankful for you. And to my late brother, Tavis, who inspired me to follow my dreams.

To my husband Grant, you’re my favourite foodie (and wine geek) to share meals with.

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INTRODUCTION

I grew up on the West Coast and spent many years on the ocean, commercial fishing with my father and enjoying boating holidays with my family. I sport-fished, dug for clams, and visited Indigenous communities where I learned about the ways Indigenous people harvest and preserve food to last them the whole year.

The West Coast is a temperate rainforest that provides ideal conditions for growing food nearly year-round. It also provides generous sustenance with wild seafood, fruits, mushrooms, and other foraged foods. I learned early on how to make the most of the bounty on our doorstep. My mother and grandmother taught me to can fruit and salmon, and my dad taught me how to sun-dry and smoke fish. My great-grandparents immigrated to Canada from Ukraine when my paternal grandmother was just five, and out of necessity, they turned their backyard into a kitchen garden. They grew heaps of potatoes, beets, and horseradish, pickled fish, and made whisky. My great-grandfather loved gardening, and he even started a successful community garden at the seniors home where he went to live in his nineties. His smile in the garden was the same one I saw as my grandmother showed me around her garden in the last weeks of her life, and I like to believe it’s the same smile on my face when I step out into my own garden. I’m sure the resurgence in growing a kitchen garden would make them smile as well.

I have had many gardens during my life. My first one was an old orchard with lots of mature fruit trees and a few small beds close to my house; the next three were established perennial gardens. I

added a kitchen garden element to them by digging a few small vegetable beds and growing herbs and tomatoes in containers.

My most recent garden, the one that inspired this book, was a fully grassed yard when I first encountered it 16 years ago. Set alongside a highway on Vancouver Island, the front yard was unused because of the noise. I painstakingly dug up hundreds of square feet of grass over the course of 4 years to convert it to an urban kitchen garden. I envisioned a place that my children could explore, somewhere they could learn about growing food. A garden to nourish my family and my soul. In addition to four zones of planting beds (so I can rotate my crops each year), I now have trees and a concrete fence to reduce the noise and add privacy. A yard that was once used only for mowing is now my oasis.

Gardens are great teachers, and I am still learning every year. Weather, unwanted rodents, a new understanding of the importance of pollinators, and unexpected interruptions—including city work and a car careening off the road and mowing down my fig tree—have all required me to adapt my gardening plans.

Over the years, I've added more flowers. Initially I wanted to grow only food, but over time I realized flowers are important because they attract and feed birds and bees and other crucial pollinators. And of course, I've also come to appreciate their beauty both outside, in the garden, and inside, displayed in vases as cut flowers. From early hellebores and cheery spring bulbs that emerge when it is still cold and rainy, to trailing edible nasturtiums and beautiful roses that garnish many a drink and salad, to dahlias and hollyhocks for bouquets, a few of my favourite flowers are almost always in bloom.

More recently, I have added more raised beds to make weeding easier (I'm getting older) and more easy-care pathways that better resist unwelcome visitors in the form of grass and weeds. At time of writing I am creating a new sitting area because I love to relax and enjoy the garden after working in it.

Things that continue working well in the garden are my other fruit trees, woody herbs including lavender that remain green through the winter, and the rock pathway that winds around the garden. These

provide structure to the garden when everything else is dormant. I also love the greenhouse and three-bin compost system my husband built for me.

I have had my share of disappointments in the garden, too. I learned the hard way that potatoes and carrots don't like to grow in dirt that used to grow grass (it's a breeding ground for wireworms). Now they grow in raised beds with fresh soil. I also learned to read plant tags thoroughly after excitedly planting kiwi vines only to end up with kiwis that are the size of a grape instead of the full-sized fruits I was anticipating.

Getting Started

If you're already a gardener, you probably have a healthy herb or vegetable patch. If you're just starting out, I recommend beginning with a herb garden, rather than diving straight into vegetable-growing. Herbs tend to be very easy to grow, and they add tons of flavour and freshness to everything you cook. Planted in a somewhat sheltered spot, rosemary, thyme, and sage can remain green all winter on the West Coast, making your Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners extra special. You can also use them to make fragrant wreaths and decorative place settings. See pages 7–11 for tips on how to grow and preserve herbs.

You can grow almost any vegetable on the West Coast, but some are easier than others. Peas, radishes, and salad greens are among the easiest, followed by bush beans, zucchini, and kale. Root vegetables like carrots, beets, and potatoes work well if you have somewhat loose soil that's at least a foot (30 cm) deep. In large gardens, squash and pumpkins are fun for kids to grow because of their big leaves, fruit, and fast growth. Rhubarb is a sweet treat in early spring and tends to be very easy to grow. Strawberries are another easy-care crop that can be grown in a garden or a container.

Try to have four separate growing areas so that you can rotate your crops every year and give the soil a chance to recover from the previous year's crop.

Native species of fruit and berry bushes and perennials are a great choice. Planting species natural to your area, wherever you live, will increase your chances of success. They tend to be easy to care for and are great food sources for pollinators. (See page 16 for some ideas on native berry bushes to plant.)

A fruit tree or two is wonderful if you have the space. When you're buying them, be sure to ask if they are self-pollinating or if they need a partner for cross-pollination. Fruit trees come in a range of sizes, and depending on their cold hardiness and space requirements, some can be planted in a pot if you think a move is in your near

future. Before you plant them in the ground, decide whether you want them to provide some shade or to leave your lower gardens exposed to the sun.

About This Book

I want to show how truly seasonally we can eat here by using our own local foods, so I’m sharing my favourite kitchen garden recipes as seasonal menus based on West Coast growing seasons. Of course, you can mix and match them depending on what you’ve grown, foraged, or bought that week, or what you’ve preserved in the preceding months. Some menus are designed to feed four people,

and others are designed to feed six. They are all designed to help you enjoy the best of the West Coast.

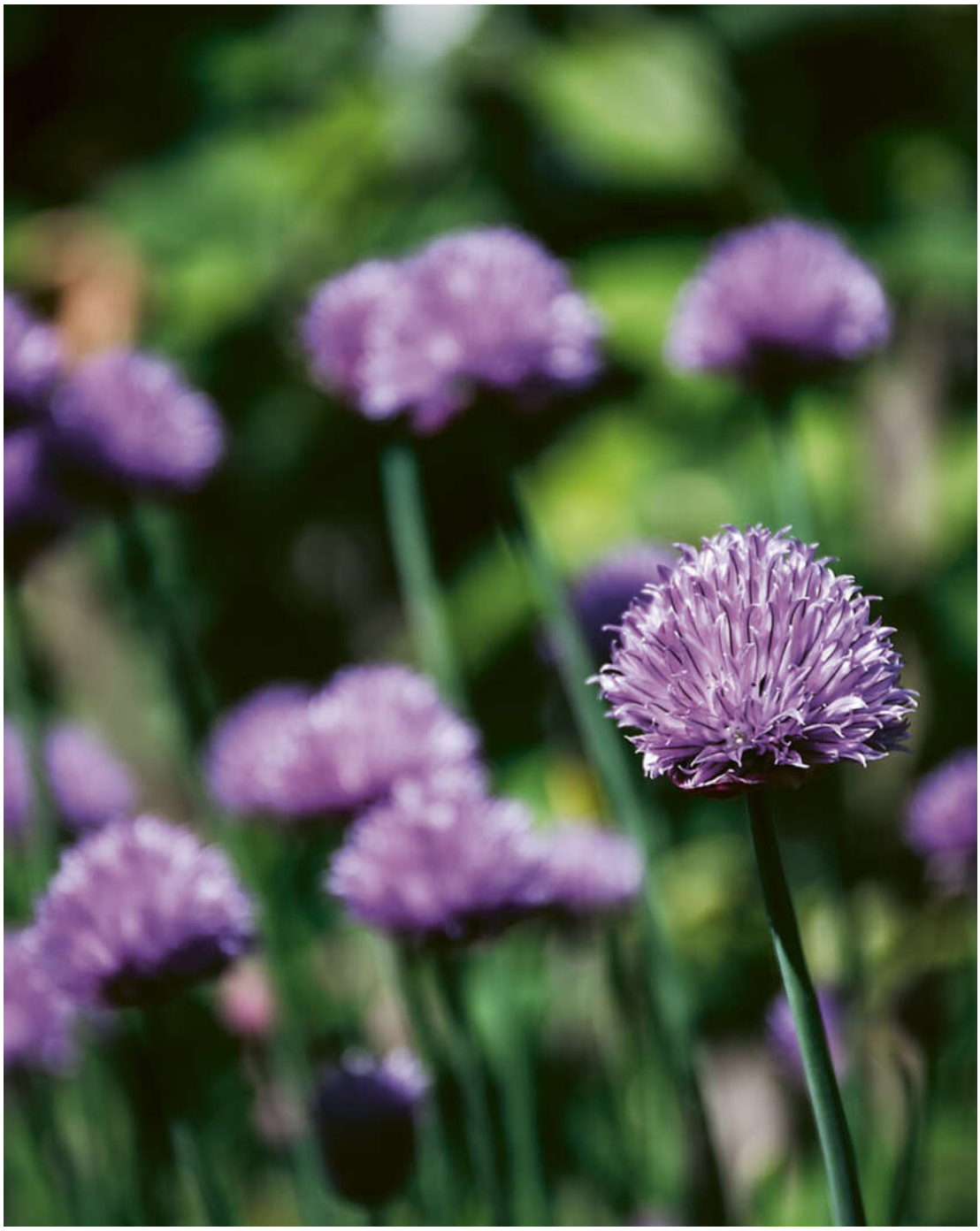
Each chapter has a list of what will be growing that season to help you plan not only your menus but also what you might want to preserve. Many ingredients will grow through two or even three seasons—you'll see some ingredients crop up in more than one chapter—but others are available for only fleeting moments. Seize those moments. Head to your garden, the fisherman's wharf, the forest, or your local farmers' market to get them while you can.

I also want to inspire you to reflect on sustainability and the value of the slower pace of growing and gathering some of your own food. World events since 2020 have brought food security to the forefront again, making teaching the next generation how to grow food even more important. The West Coast is now home to many independent producers of wine, cider, beer, sea salt, vinegar, milled grains, and much more. It makes me so happy to find these products being made practically in my own backyard.

There may be other places in the world as bountiful as the Pacific Northwest, but there's nowhere I'd rather be. This is my love letter to the land, the seasons, and those who came before me and taught me what they know. I hope this book inspires you to grow some food, shop locally at farms and markets, and enjoy cooking these deliciously simple recipes.

Cheers, Friends!

—Sabrina



GROWING AND PRESERVING HERBS

Herbs are an easy and elegant way to level up any recipe, and they provide great food for bees, too. They're also a great gateway to edible gardening because most of them are easy to grow, whether you have a large garden or only space for a few planters. They require little space, enhance meals with fresh flavour and valuable nutrients, and are incredibly versatile. If you enjoy cooking with a range of flavours and creating a pollinator-friendly garden, herbs are an excellent choice.

If you're new to growing herbs, choose some basics like curly or flat-leaf (Italian) parsley, regular or garlic chives, and French thyme. If you're a seasoned pro, try new varieties every year. Lemon and orange thyme have a gorgeous, sweet scent—and don't get me started on all the great types of basil you can grow.

I use herbs every day, but it would cost you a small fortune to buy every herb I use in my recipes from the grocery store. So, read on and get started on growing your own so you can cook through this book without breaking the bank!

Growing Herbs

Spring is the ideal season to plant herbs. On much of the West Coast, early herbs can be planted after the last frost, which comes any time from mid-March to mid-April, depending on where you are. Heat-loving herbs can be planted out around the May long weekend. For extended leaf production, remove any flower buds as they appear.

You can start your herbs from seeds, nursery transplants, cuttings, or root divisions. Woody herbs like rosemary, thyme, savory, and lavender take longer to grow from seed but are easy to buy as starters and simple to propagate. Softer herbs usually germinate faster and can be grown from seed or purchased as starters at garden centres and farmers' markets. Herbs with a tap root, such as parsley and cilantro, are best direct-seeded as they will bolt easily if transplanted.

To grow herbs from seed, plant them in small pots with drainage holes and sterilized soil mix, and keep them in a greenhouse or indoors on a draft-free, sunny windowsill; or direct-sow them outside according to the package directions. Most herbs that benefit from being started indoors have a long germination period and may need to be started as early as February. Sterilized soil is important to prevent mould or damping-off. Keep the soil moist until seedlings emerge, then allow the top of the soil to dry before watering again. Pinch off overcrowded seedlings and the tops of taller ones once they're 4–6 inches (10–15 cm) tall to encourage branching.

Propagating with cuttings is straightforward: Take a 4–6-inch (10–15 cm) cutting with four to six leaves, remove the lower leaves, and place the bottom of the cutting in water or soil. Softer-stemmed herbs, such as mint and oregano, root well in water; woody herbs, such as lavender and rosemary, thrive in soil. When transplanting herb starters, ask the garden centre about outdoor planting times or check online.

Some herbs are easier to grow than others. Parsley and chives are hardy biennials and self-seed. Borage, which has blue, cucumber-flavoured blooms, is another easy-to-grow, self-seeding herb. Rosemary, lavender, thyme, sage, and savory are perennials that remain evergreen in milder areas. I've had great success

planting my rosemary close to the house to give it just enough extra protection to remain evergreen each winter.

Basil, oregano, and echinacea prefer full sun, and dill and parsley can tolerate shade. Mint and lemon balm spread aggressively if not contained, so they are good candidates for containers.

You can find many herbs in nature, too. Have fun foraging for wild herbs like nettles, dandelion, mint, plantain, and yarrow—and remember to forage responsibly.

Between May and September, most herbs will be growing and thriving, but once the cold sets in, delicate herbs like basil and tarragon will wilt. Cool-weather herbs like cilantro and chives can be planted again in mid- to late summer for another crop before the first frost arrives. Fresh soft herbs are less productive in winter, but established evergreen herbs will continue to produce in all but the harshest of winters, although their growth slows substantially as the days become shorter.

Growing through Winter

The best way to extend the fresh herb season is to use a cold frame, cloche, hoop tunnel, or greenhouse to insulate your plants against harsh temperatures. The herbs need to be started in late summer before winter sets in. But even with protection, their growth will slow as the daylight retreats, so with that in mind, plant extra herbs to compensate. Hardy herb choices that can survive most of winter with protection are parsley, thyme, rosemary, lavender, sage, chives, oregano, sorrel, mint, and chervil.

Some herbs will grow on your windowsill if you have a sunny south-facing window, especially if you grow them as microgreens, harvesting them when they are small and replanting them frequently. You can also use a grow light to keep growing your favourites year-round if you have the space.

Preserving Herbs

If you don’t want to try to keep your herbs alive through winter, or you’re growing less hardy herbs such as basil, dill, and cilantro, you can preserve them to enjoy later. Here are ten easy ways to savour your harvest throughout fall and into winter.

1. Keep them fresh. If you are bringing herbs in from the farmers’ market, they will stay fresh in your fridge for up to 2 weeks if you treat them like a bouquet. Simply trim the stems and place the herbs in a glass of water (1–2 inches/2.5–5 cm deep). Change the water every few days and snip the herbs as needed.

2. Freeze them in water. Add chopped or whole herbs to ice-cube trays, fill halfway with water, then freeze. Once frozen, top

with more water to completely encase the herbs, let the added water freeze, and then store the ice cubes in freezer bags. This will help prevent oxidation and retain the best possible flavour. Herbed ice cubes are perfect to throw in soups and stews and can also work in cocktails and baking.

3. Freeze them in olive oil. Leave the herbs whole or chop them, depending on how you like to use them, pack them in airtight containers or freezer bags, and cover them with oil before placing them in the freezer. You can also freeze them in ice-cube trays by following the instructions for freezing them in water. Once they're frozen, you can store them in an airtight freezer bag or container. Olive oil herb cubes are good for sautéed dishes, pastas, salad dressings, and other recipes that you don't want to add water to.

4. Make a herb cigar. Roll soft, delicate herbs in a tight, cigar-like cylinder in a freezer bag. Squeeze out as much air as possible, wrap the roll with an elastic band to keep its shape, and put it in the freezer. Cut off slices of the frozen herb stick as you need them. Soft herbs that don't turn brown quickly work well this way. Try dill, cilantro, parsley, sage, tarragon, and chervil. I don't recommend using this method for basil.

5. Dry them. Dried herbs are so versatile, and there are a few ways you can easily dry them. The easiest is in a dehydrator or the oven. See page 334 for instructions on how to do this. Alternatively, you can use the microwave or even the sun.

To dry herbs in the microwave, place them in a single layer between paper towels and microwave them on regular power in 20-second increments. Toss them between each burst of heat and repeat until they are completely dry. To sun-dry herbs, choose a hot summer day, then lay them in a single layer on a tray and let them sit out in the sun for the day.

Whichever method you use, once the herbs are completely dry, let them cool completely and then crumble them and store

in airtight jars or bags.

6. Layer them in salt or sugar. This option lets you get double the enjoyment from your dried herbs. After you've used them, you can then use the salt or sugar you dried them in. It will be infused with all their delicious flavours. See page 366 for instructions on how to preserve herbs in salt and sugar. (If you plan to use the herbs for baking or in tea, use the sugar option.)

7. Make herbed finishing salt. Herbed finishing salt is not the same as infused salt. The salt crystals are larger and the herbs are blended in rather than layered whole in the salt. Here on the West Coast we have access to gorgeous large-flake crystallized sea salt, which is perfect for this. Choose a single herb or make your favourite blend. Place 1 cup (250 ml) of fresh herbs in a food processor fitted with a steel blade and blitz until the herbs are fine. Add 1 cup (250 ml) coarse sea salt and pulse just once or twice to mix without crushing all the salt crystals. Spread the salt on a tray to dry for a day or so at room temperature and then store this versatile ingredient in an airtight container near where you cook. Made with thyme, parsley, tarragon, or chervil, it's fantastic sprinkled over simple pan-fried or grilled fish and veggies. Rosemary salt is a great topper for grilled steaks, and sage and thyme salt is a classic finish for chicken or turkey. Herbed finishing salt will last indefinitely if kept dry and covered, although the flavours will start to fade a little after 6 months.

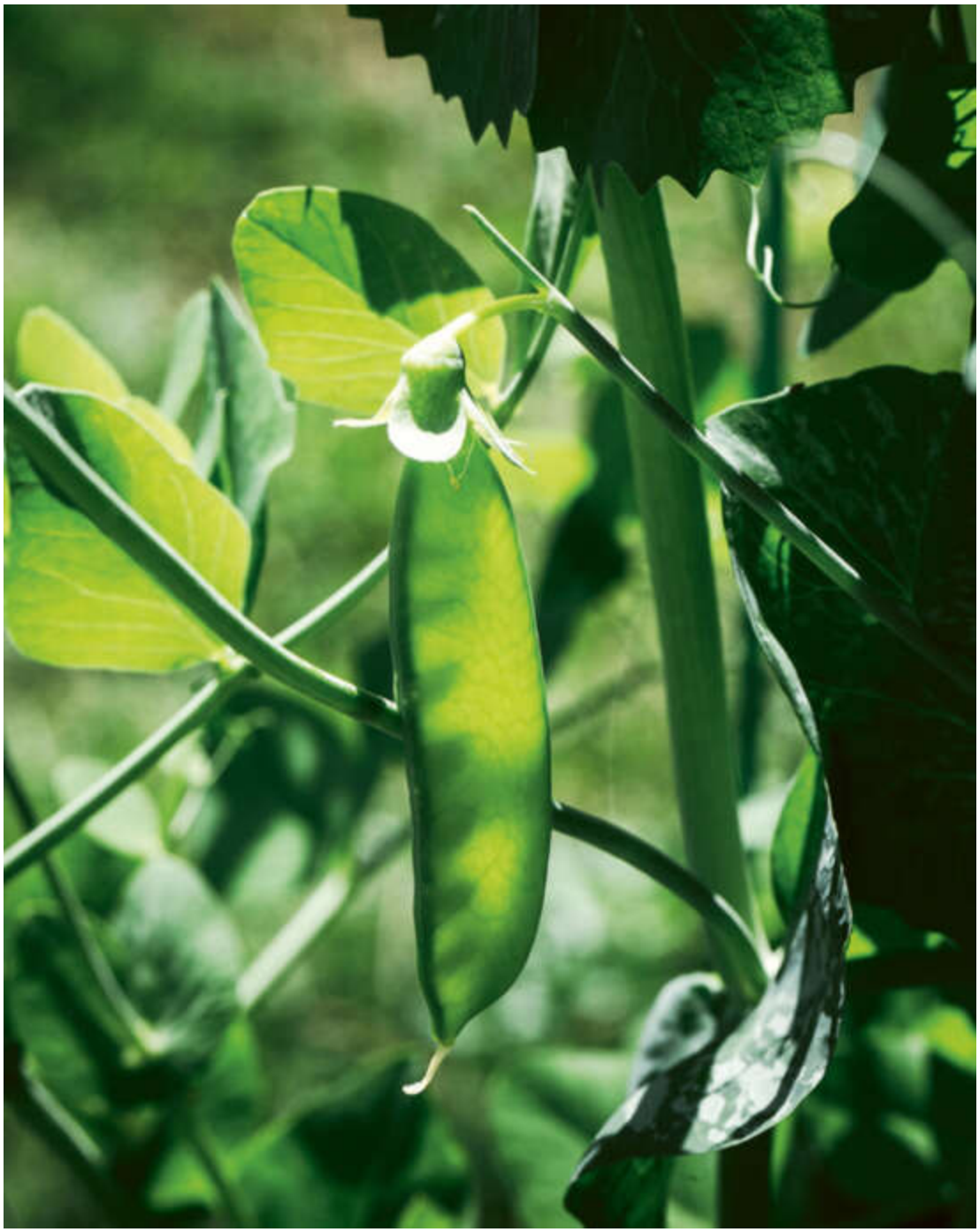
8. Make herbal vinegar. Infuse simple champagne or white wine vinegar with herbs to add subtle yet complex flavour to salad dressings and fresh veggies. Tie about 3 tablespoons (45 ml) of washed and patted-dry herbs together (rosemary, chives, tarragon, thyme, etc.) for every 2 cups (500 ml) of vinegar, and place them in a clean, airtight bottle. Fill the bottle to within 1 inch (2.5 cm) of the top with vinegar, making sure all the herbs are submerged. Secure the lid and let the vinegar sit in a cool, dry, dark place for 2 weeks. Once the vinegar is infused, strain it

into a fresh, airtight bottle and discard the herbs. Strained well and stored out of direct sunlight, this vinegar will keep indefinitely.

9. Make compound butter (herb butter). Finely chop or mince herbs to measure ½ cup (125 ml) and mash them with ½ cup (125 ml) of softened salted or unsalted butter (I prefer using salted butter). Compound butter will last for 1 week in your fridge if made with fresh herbs and up to 3 weeks if you've used dried herbs. For longer storage, form it into a log, wrap it tightly in plastic wrap, and store in the freezer for up to about 3 months. Cut off slices of the frozen butter log as you need them and let them come to room temperature before using. It's excellent on bread and toast, pasta sauce, and scrambled eggs.

10. Make pesto. This is a similar process to freezing herbs in olive oil but it will give you a ready-to-use blend that keeps well. See page 347 for my favourite pesto recipe. Pesto is versatile, so go beyond the traditional basil and pine nuts and change it up with your favourite combinations of herbs and nuts.

Spring



SPRING IN THE GARDEN

The first day of spring is at the vernal equinox, when day and night are equal. It's a fun reason to host a dinner party or simply devote the day to being in your garden.

Nature is coming to life around now. If you love foraging, as I do, it's time to take a basket into the forest or to the beach. I like to blanch and freeze nettles while they're plentiful, dig for clams or gather oysters while their meat is firm, and collect salty, crisp sea asparagus from the shore. Spring also means it's finally time to really get busy in the garden, both planting and harvesting.

If I haven't planted garlic in the fall, I plant it in the early spring. Broad beans are another early sowing crop that can go in right away. Peas and radishes can be sown in the ground and tomato seedlings can be started indoors.

By the end of May, all crops started indoors, except melons, can be planted outside. Melons should not be transplanted until June. Spring temperatures vary a lot between April and June and across regions, so read your seed packets to figure out the ideal planting time for your area.

If your rhubarb is getting old, dig it up and divide the roots before it starts sprouting. If you want more fruit trees, early spring is a great time to plant them.

By the beginning of May, I am harvesting my perennial arugula, chives, kale, and any remaining overwintered vegetables. Rhubarb is ready, too. By late May and early June, peas and radishes are ready for salads and early-season strawberries are a tasty treat. June brings baby carrots and all herbs, and by late June, my blueberries are ripening.

Spring is a season of hope and renewal. As the days lengthen, I am outside in my kitchen garden more and the stresses of life start to fade a little. I hope you have the same experience.

Harvest Now

- Arugula

- Asparagus
- Blueberries
- Boysenberries
- Carrots (baby carrot thinnings)
- Chives
- Cilantro
- Garlic
- Haskap berries
- Kale
- Overwintered beets, carrots, onions, potatoes, and Brussels sprouts
- Parsley
- Peas
- Raspberries
- Rhubarb
- Saskatoon berries (serviceberries)
- Spinach
- Strawberries
- Swiss chard

Forage Now

- Burdock
- Chickweed (maybe in your own garden!)
- Clover
- Dandelion

- Fiddleheads
- Fir and spruce tips
- Lamb’s quarters
- Miner’s lettuce (claytonia)
- Morel mushrooms
- Nettles (wear gloves!)
- Oyster mushrooms
- Plantain
- Purslane
- Ramps
- Samphire (sea asparagus)
- Sorrel
- Violets
- Watercress
- Wild asparagus
- Wild garlic

Direct-Sow Now

- Arugula
- Beets
- Broad beans
- Collards
- Cress
- Endive
- Fennel

- Kale
- Kohlrabi
- Mustard greens
- Onions
- Parsnips
- Peas
- Potatoes
- Radishes
- Scallions
- Spinach
- Swiss chard
- Turnips

Start Indoors in Early Spring

- Asparagus
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Eggplant
- Leeks
- Lettuce
- Melons
- Peppers
- Radicchio

- Tomatoes

West Coast Berries

If you’re an avid gardener or you have a large property, you have countless interesting berry varieties to choose from, many of which are native to the West Coast. Growing berries is a great way to add to the permaculture of your garden and reap yearly rewards with very little maintenance. The early blossoms of berry bushes are extremely beneficial to pollinators, as their flowers attract hummingbirds, bees, and butterflies.

The berries I list here are perennials. Once you plant them, you will be rewarded with fruit year after year. These berry bushes prefer soil that is in the range of acidic to neutral—that is, it has a pH of 5–7. We have no shortage of that here on the “wet” coast, and berries grow easily in our climate. Another advantage of these local species is that they often grow well in both sunny and shady conditions. Berry bushes are best planted in early spring or late fall while they’re dormant.

Here are a few suggestions for you.

GOOSEBERRIES

Gooseberries are part of the currant family and are larger, juicier, and less tart than their more familiar cousin. They are a self-pollinating bush with subtle flowers in spring and pretty, bright-red foliage in fall. Gooseberry bushes prefer full sun and good airflow. The many varieties come in a range of flavours and fruit colours, from yellow to red to purple. They are hardy to Zone 3.

HASKAP BERRIES

Haskap berries (aka honeyberries) are often called the berry of long life. They are a blue honeysuckle native to Canada, among other northern countries. Tangy, sweet, juicy, and a little astringent, the haskap berry looks like an elongated blueberry and is full of vitamins and nutrients. These beautiful and tidy bushes produce best when planted as a pair for pollination. They are hardy down to Zone 2 and especially tolerant of wet conditions. Newer cultivars are sweeter and tastier than the wild growing species.

HUCKLEBERRIES

Huckleberries are a beautiful and delicate addition to a woodland garden. Here on the West Coast we are familiar with the tiny red variety, but they also come in shades of purple, blue, and black. Hardy to Zone 5 and lower, the little red berries are sweet and

delicious eaten fresh off the bush. They are smaller than the other berries mentioned here, so you need a lot to bake a pie or make jam. Huckleberries are one of the few fruits that do better in shade than sun.

LINGONBERRIES

Lingonberries, popular in Scandinavian countries, are a close relative of the blueberry but much tarter. Like their cranberry cousin, this fruit tends to be cooked to temper its tartness and accentuate the sweetness, rather than eaten raw. It gets my vote not just because of its flavour but also because it makes a stunning low-growing landscape plant that can be used as groundcover or low edging. (Its roots even give off chemicals that deter weeds!) Grow rows of them and plant two varieties for pollination. This glossy-leafed plant will give you two harvests (one in summer and one in fall) and is hardy to Zone 2.

OSOBERRIES

Osoberries (aka Oregon berries) can grow in many conditions, from full sun to full shade, and are often found wild on the edge of forests. These native bushes make excellent hedges, growing tall without spreading invasively. Early white blossoms herald the arrival of

spring and morph into large purple berries that look like bunches of small plums.

RED FLOWERING CURRANTS

Red flowering currant bushes make an ideal gift because of their stunning fuchsia flowers and resistance to deer. At home in borders and woodland gardens, these tidy shrubs produce small, tart, blue-black berries with small seeds and a thin wax coating. They taste best cooked and make deep, dark, and delicious jams, syrups, and pie fillings.

SASKATOON BERRIES

Saskatoon berries (aka June berries or serviceberries) are particularly cold-hardy, will produce for up to 30 years—sometimes even longer—and aren't too picky about soil conditions. Sweet, nutty Saskatoons look very similar to blueberries but are more closely related to apples. These berries will continue to ripen after picking. While the bushes can grow quite tall, mine are just a little taller than my blueberry bushes, sitting at about 1.5–2 metres (about 5–7 feet). Extremely low maintenance, these are hardy to Zone 2.

SEA BUCKTHORN BERRIES

Sea buckthorn berries (aka sea berries) are becoming increasingly popular in upscale restaurants. These tangerine-coloured berries have a unique flavour with hints of mango, orange, and pineapple against a sour background. Its elegant silver-green foliage creates a beautiful backdrop for the bright orange berries, making it a great choice for an edible garden border. Think carefully before you add sea buckthorn to your garden, though. It can become invasive like raspberry plants, and it requires a male and female plant close together to fruit. The positives of sea buckthorn are that it is extremely cold-hardy, survives drought and salt spray, and does fine in poor soil.

OTHER OPTIONS

- Boysenberry
- Cranberry
- Elderberry (needs to be cooked before eating)
- Jostaberry
- Juniper (a beautiful silvery-green bush with tiny berries that are dried and used for flavouring soup or stew, in marinades, and for making gin)
- Loganberry
- Marionberry
- Mulberry
- Oregon grape
- Salmonberry
- Tayberry
- Thimbleberry

SPRING IN THE KITCHEN

MENU ONE

Spring Equinox Supper

Serves 6

Nettle Feta Crostini

Braised Lamb Shanks with Herb and Citrus Gremolata

Spring Pea Risotto with Pea Shoots

Cardamom and Black Pepper Spiced Rhubarb Crumble

Cherry Blossom Spritz

MENU TWO

Full Flower Moon Feast

Serves 4

Asparagus Salad with Ricotta, Honey, and Lemon

Herbed Cheese Biscuits

Spring Halibut and Vegetables in Brodo with Lemon Dill Mayo

Lemon Lavender Cookies

Fir Tip Tea

MENU THREE

Easter Celebration

Serves 4

Garden Salad with Peas and Cheddar Crisps

Garlic Sautéed Fiddleheads

Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, and Thyme No-Knead Bread

Niçoise-Style Sheet Pan Chicken

Saskatoon Berry Cupcakes

Strawberry and Nootka Rose Shrub

MENU FOUR

In Praise of Parents

Serves 4

Dungeness Crab Salad with Cilantro and Mint

Thai Coconut Curried Whole Spot Prawns

Thai Green Curry Paste

Balsamic Roast Strawberries with Sweet Cream

Biscuits

Thai Mojito

MENU FIVE

Dinner in the Herb Garden

Serves 4

French Sorrel Soup

Arugula Salad with Goat Cheese and Honey

Pork Chops with Pickled Rhubarb

Potatoes with Green Garden Sauce

Lavender Blueberry Crème Brûlée

Blueberry Bellini

Menu One Spring Equinox Supper

SERVES 6

- Nettle Feta Crostini
- Braised Lamb Shanks with Herb and Citrus Gremolata
- Spring Pea Risotto with Pea Shoots
- Cardamom and Black Pepper Spiced Rhubarb Crumble
- Cherry Blossom Spritz

Oh, the joy as the first spring foods burst through the ground and we celebrate the light and dark being equal. Fresh nettles are added to soups and braises and celebrated on tiny toasts, and the first small stalks of tangy rhubarb are dipped in sugar and eaten out of hand with my daughter. Sweet fresh chives are snipped and the cut end dipped in salt as an ode to my grandma. Spring has begun.

Nettle Feta Crostini

Makes 18

This fresh take on a classic Greek recipe has all the savoury flavours of spanakopita and none of the fuss of folding phyllo. Use your preferred early-season hearty greens if you can’t find wild nettles.

1 egg
1 clove garlic, minced
¼ cup (60 ml) plain yogurt (2%)
1 tsp (5 ml) grated lemon zest
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground nutmeg
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground black pepper
⅛ tsp (0.5 ml) cayenne pepper
1 cup (250 ml) cooked and cooled, chopped nettles (about 8 cups/2 L fresh nettles) (see Cook’s notes)
¾ cup (185 ml) crumbled feta cheese, divided
½ cup (125 ml) chopped soft spring herbs (dill, parsley, mint, or chives)
1 baguette
2 Tbsp (30 ml) olive oil

- Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- In a medium bowl, mix together the egg, garlic, yogurt, lemon zest, nutmeg, pepper, and cayenne. Add the nettles, ½ cup (125 ml) of the feta, and the spring herbs. Mix until combined.
- Slice the baguette into ½-inch (1.25 cm) thick slices and place them on the prepared baking sheet. Using a pastry brush, brush a small amount of olive oil over each slice. Place them in the oven until the edges brown and they are starting to crisp, about 4 minutes.
- Remove the toasted bread from the oven and top each slice with a scoop of the nettle mixture. Sprinkle the remaining feta cheese over top and place them back in the oven until cooked through and the feta is melty and starting to brown slightly, about 10 minutes. Serve while warm.

Cook’s notes

Nettles are among the first wild foods to pop up in early spring. If you find a patch, wear gloves while picking them and take only a sustainable percentage. Nettles must be cooked before eating if you don’t want to be stung. Blanch them for 5 minutes in salted boiling water, then drain them in a colander and immediately run cold water over them to stop the cooking. Gently squeeze the water out with your hands and use them right away or store them in airtight containers or freezer bags for up to 3 days in the refrigerator or 6 months in the freezer. They don’t take up much space. I like to freeze them in 1-cup (250 ml) portions for soup, pasta, and crostini.

If you use other greens, blanch and drain them before adding them.

Braised Lamb Shanks with Herb and Citrus Gremolata

Serves 6

Lamb shanks have quite a bit of meat on them, so you can make them go far. If you get smaller shanks, you can serve each guest a whole shank with the bone for a gorgeous and dramatic presentation. If you find large shanks, you can pull the meat off the bone and divide it to serve six. The sauce thickens naturally as the

vegetables soften and combine with the marrow. The topping, gremolata, is a delicious Italian condiment, and I urge you to make it. It is fresh and bright, a great way to use up lots of garden herbs, and the thing that really makes this recipe special. You can use flat or curly parsley for the gremolata, but curly parsley keeps it a lighter texture.

Braised lamb

- 4 × 1½ lb or 6 × 1 lb (4 × 750 g or 6 × 500 g) lamb shanks
- 2 tsp (10 ml) coarse salt
- 1 tsp (5 ml) ground black pepper
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
- 1½ cups (375 ml) chopped yellow onion
- 1 cup (250 ml) diced celery
- 1 cup (250 ml) diced carrots
- 4 cloves garlic, smashed
- 1½ cups (375 ml) unoaked dry white wine
- 2 cups (500 ml) diced tomatoes or 2 cups (500 ml) canned diced tomatoes with their juice
- 4 cups (1 L) chicken stock
- 1 small bunch each of fresh thyme, curly parsley, and savory on the stem, tied together, or 1 tsp (5 ml) each of dried thyme, savory, and parsley
- 1 2-inch (5 cm) sprig of rosemary or ½ tsp (2.5 ml) dried rosemary
- 1 fresh or dried bay leaf

Gremolata

- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) coarse salt
- 1 cup (250 ml) chopped fresh curly parsley
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) finely grated lemon zest
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) finely grated navel orange zest
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) capers, coarsely chopped

Make the braised lamb

- With the rack in the middle position, preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).
- Rinse the lamb shanks to remove any bone fragments, pat dry, and season generously with salt and pepper.

- Warm a large Dutch oven or other ovenproof pot over medium heat, then add the oil and lamb shanks. Sear the lamb on all sides. Be patient and let them get deep brown in spots. Remove the pot from the heat, take out the shanks, and set them aside on a plate.
- In the same pot, stir together the onions, celery, carrots, and garlic. Return the pot to the stove and reduce the heat to medium-low. Fry until the vegetables are softened, about 5 minutes, then deglaze the pan by adding the white wine to the pot and increasing the heat to medium-high. Stir and scrape up any brown bits, return the lamb to the pot and add the tomatoes, stock, and herbs. Bring to a boil, cover, and transfer to the oven.
- Let cook for 1 hour. The lamb will be getting tender by this point and there should be a lot of liquid in the pot. Reduce the oven temperature to 325°F (160°C), remove the lid, and continue to cook, uncovered, letting the lamb brown and the liquids reduce. Stir the ingredients once per hour to incorporate the browned top and encourage more browning. Cook until the sauce is reduced by half, about 2 more hours. Remove from the oven and replace the lid to keep warm until you're ready to serve.
- When you're ready to serve, mash some of the vegetables against the edge of the pot with a wooden spoon to help them meld into the sauce. Taste and adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper if needed.

Make the gremolata

- About ½ hour before the lamb is ready, in a small bowl, mash together the minced garlic and salt to make a paste. Add the parsley, lemon zest, orange zest, and capers, and stir gently.
- Spoon spring pea risotto (see page 33) into four large shallow bowls and top each with a lamb shank and a good spoonful or

two of the sauce. (If you’re serving six, spoon the meat over the risotto.) Sprinkle some gremolata over each bowl and enjoy.

Cook’s notes

This is traditionally served with risotto or soft polenta, but it also pairs great with mashed potatoes.

Spring Pea Risotto with Pea Shoots

Serves 6

Tender sweet peas and pea shoots bring a welcome taste of spring to this comforting risotto. I've suggested pairing it with braised lamb shanks (page 29), but it's also delicious by itself or with grilled chicken or fish.

2 Tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
¼ cup (60 ml) minced shallot
2 cloves garlic, minced
1½ cups (375 ml) arborio rice (or other short-grain rice)
½ cup (125 ml) dry unoaked white wine
1 bay leaf
5 cups (1.25 L) hot vegetable stock (see Cook's note)
1½ cups (375 ml) shelled spring peas 1½ cups (375 ml) pea shoots
½ cup (125 ml) finely chopped curly parsley
½ cup (125 ml) finely chopped chives
1 cup (250 ml) grated parmesan cheese
Salt and pepper

- In a large, high-sided frying pan, warm the oil on medium-low heat. Add the shallots and garlic and cook gently until translucent.
- Stir in the rice, then add the wine and bay leaf.
- Add the stock, ½ cup (125 ml) at a time, stirring every few minutes and adding more stock as it becomes absorbed.
- When the rice is al dente, about 18–20 minutes, add the peas, pea shoots, parsley, and chives. Stir gently. If the risotto gets too dry, add an extra tablespoon or two (15–30 ml) of stock or water, as needed.
- Sprinkle in the grated parmesan. Stir gently until it's melted in, about 2 more minutes, then season to taste with salt and pepper and serve immediately.

Cook's notes

Keep the vegetable stock hot in a saucepan over low heat while you make the risotto. Depending on how much is absorbed and evaporated once the risotto is cooked, you may not need the entire amount of stock.

Gardener’s note

Planting extra peas will give you lots of extra delicious pea shoots to use in salads, stir-fries, and other recipes. If you’re clipping them from near the soil, be sure to wash them well before using them in raw dishes.

Cardamom and Black Pepper Spiced Rhubarb Crumble

Serves 6

This recipe works equally well with fresh or frozen chopped rhubarb. It can be made a day ahead and reheated for 10 minutes before serving. The black pepper provides an elegant level of spice, and the cardamom adds a warm and comforting note.

1½ cups (375 ml) packed brown sugar, divided

1 cup (250 ml) all-purpose flour, divided
¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
8 cups (2 L) 1-inch (2.5 cm) pieces rhubarb
2 tsp (10 ml) vanilla extract
1 cup (250 ml) quick-cooking oats
½ tsp (2.5 ml) baking powder
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground cinnamon
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground cardamom
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground nutmeg
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper
½ cup (125 ml) butter, melted and still warm
Ice cream or whipped cream, for serving

- Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).
- In a large bowl, combine ¾ cup (185 mL) sugar, ¼ cup (60 ml) flour, and the salt. Stir to combine, then add the chopped rhubarb and vanilla and toss until all the rhubarb is coated in sugar mixture. Set aside for the rhubarb to release some juice.
- In a separate bowl, whisk together the remaining sugar and flour, the oats, baking powder, cinnamon, cardamom, nutmeg, and pepper. Pour the melted butter over everything and stir until the mixture is crumbly and well combined.
- Pour the rhubarb mixture with its juice into a 10-inch (25 cm) round or 9-inch (23 cm) square baking pan (there’s no need to grease the pan). Sprinkle the crumble mix evenly over top and place it in the oven to bake.
- Bake until the top is golden brown and the rhubarb is tender, juicy, and slightly thickened, about 40 minutes.
- Let the crumble cool for 20–30 minutes before serving warm with vanilla bean ice cream or whipped cream.

Cherry Blossom Spritz

Serves 6

Cherries may not be in season yet, but their blossoms are, and this is a cheerful drink to celebrate the season.

¼ cup (60 ml) lemon juice
1 Tbsp (15 ml) granulated sugar, plus more for rimming the glasses
8 oz (250 ml) vodka
4 oz (125 ml) orange liqueur
1 cup (250 ml) tart cherry juice
2 cups (500 ml) club soda
Lemon wedge, for rimming the glasses Ice, for serving
6 cherry blossoms, for garnish (optional)

- In a large pitcher filled with large ice cubes, combine the lemon juice and sugar and stir to dissolve. Add the vodka, orange liqueur, and cherry juice, stir to blend well, and adjust sugar to taste, then top with soda water, stirring once more.
- Pour a bit of sugar onto a small saucer. Run the lemon wedge around the top of each glass and dip the rims into the sugar, then fill the glasses with ice. Pour drink mixture into glasses and top with cherry blossoms for garnish, if using.

Menu Two

Full Flower Moon Feast

SERVES 4

- Asparagus Salad with Ricotta, Honey, and Lemon
- Herbed Cheese Biscuits
- Spring Halibut and Vegetables in Brodo with Lemon Dill Mayo
- Lemon Lavender Cookies
- Fir Tip Tea

Breathing in the fresh forest air in the spring feels like taking much-needed medicine. A wander through patches of fireweed and daisies with fir and cedar trees bursting with bright green growth above is therapy for my soul after a long winter. In the garden, lavender, chive blossoms, and asparagus are popping up. Halibut is arriving at the dock and is perfect in a delicate broth, embellished with a few fresh spring vegetables. Lavender and fir tips make an equally delicate final course.

Asparagus Salad with Ricotta, Honey, and Lemon

Serves 4

I love using anything tiny growing in my garden as a garnish. When I was making the asparagus salad for this book, I noticed some squash blossoms peeking out from under their leaves. As I bent to pick them, I saw little yellow patty pans in their very early stages—a tender early bite that was perfect for a pop of colour in this crisp and

creamy salad. Early beet or chard shoots, with their bright-red veins, make another great garnish for this, as do pea shoots or baby sorrel leaves.

2 cups (500 ml) asparagus, woody ends trimmed (about 18–20 asparagus spears)
½ cup (125 ml) ricotta cheese
2 tsp (10 ml) grated lemon zest
½ tsp (2.5 ml) sea salt, divided
½ tsp (2.5 ml) fresh coarsely ground black pepper
2 Tbsp (30 ml) lemon juice, divided
1 Tbsp (15 ml) minced shallot
3 Tbsp (45 ml) olive oil
1 Tbsp (15 ml) champagne vinegar
1 Tbsp (15 ml) honey
1 tsp (5 ml) Dijon mustard
1–2 cups (250–500 ml) mixed herbs, lettuces, or pea shoots, for garnish
4 slices pancetta or bacon, cooked until crispy and crumbled (optional)

- Prepare an ice bath.
- Blanch the asparagus in boiling salted water for 1 minute, strain into a colander, and then cool quickly in the ice bath. Drain, dry thoroughly, and set aside.
- In a small bowl, stir together the ricotta, lemon zest, ¼ teaspoon (1 ml) salt, pepper, and 1 teaspoon (5 ml) lemon juice.
- Place the minced shallot in a separate small bowl. Add the remaining lemon juice and salt, the oil, vinegar, honey, and mustard, and whisk until emulsified.
- To serve, arrange the asparagus on a serving platter or four salad plates. Top with dollops of ricotta and a sprinkle of herbs and pancetta, if using. Drizzle the dressing evenly over top and enjoy.

Gardener’s note

A patch of asparagus takes a bit of time to get established and it needs a dedicated area of the garden, but the reward is well worth the time and effort. Asparagus is best started from crowns (a cluster of thick roots similar to dahlia tubers) rather than seeds and will take 2–3 years to start producing well. Tender spring spears can be cooked or eaten raw. Asparagus can also be the star of a soup, salad, or tart and is an easy side dish for almost any meal.

Herbed Cheese Biscuits

Makes 12

This easy recipe is a great way to incorporate any herbs that are in season. Some herbs have a stronger flavour, like rosemary and sage, so use less of those and more of the mild herbs like parsley and chives.

2 cups (500 ml) all-purpose flour
1 Tbsp (15 ml) baking powder
⅓ cup (80 ml) salted butter, cold, cubed
1 cup (250 ml) shredded medium cheddar cheese
¼–½ cup (60–125 ml) chopped herbs such as parsley, chives, dill, sage, rosemary, or thyme
¾ cup (185 ml) whole milk

- Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- In a large bowl, stir together the flour and baking powder. Add the cold butter and then use a pastry blender or two knives to chop it into small, pea-sized pieces in the flour. Add the cheese and herbs and toss until evenly distributed. Pour in the milk and mix gently, just until the mixture is moistened.
- Lightly flour a work surface.
- Press the dough together gently with your hands and turn out onto your work surface. Knead gently three to four times, just until the dough sticks together. Roll the dough out to about 1 inch (2.5 cm) thick and then cut into squares, triangles, or rounds that are about 2 inches (5 cm) in diameter or width.
- Place the dough on the prepared baking sheet, about 1 inch (2.5 cm) apart.
- Bake until the edges are golden brown and a toothpick inserted in the centre of a biscuit comes out clean, about 12–14 minutes.

Spring Halibut and Vegetables in Brodo with Lemon Dill Mayo

Serves 4

This is a light, flavourful dinner bowl. The vegetable broth of fresh spring peas and onions highlights the delicate flavour and texture of the halibut, and the simple lemon dill mayo adds the perfect amount of tartness. If you have any frozen sliced pine mushrooms, they would be a delicious addition to the subtle Asian flavour of the broth.

Broth

6 cups (1.5 L) chicken stock
1 yellow onion, quartered
1 1-inch (2.5 cm) piece of peeled ginger
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 stalk lemongrass, peeled and crushed
1 fresh or dried bay leaf
2 cups (500 ml) halved new potatoes
1 cup (250 ml) diced carrot
1 large bunch scallions, sliced, greens and whites separated
1 tsp (5 ml) sea salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) finely ground pepper
2 cups (500 ml) whole snap peas
1 cup (250 ml) shelled peas
½ cup (125 ml) sliced radishes
4 × 5–6 oz (4 × 150–175 g) portions of boneless, skinless halibut

Lemon dill mayonnaise

½ cup (125 ml) good-quality mayonnaise
1 Tbsp (15 ml) chopped fresh dill
1 tsp (5 ml) grated lemon zest
1 Tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice
3–5 dashes hot sauce

Make the broth

- Heat the stock in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add the onions, ginger, garlic, lemongrass, and bay leaf. Bring it to a boil and then reduce the heat to medium and let it simmer for 15 minutes. Add the potatoes, carrots, and whites of the scallions and cook until the potatoes are just fork-tender, about 15 minutes. Add the salt and pepper, taste the broth, and season with more if needed. Add the peas and radishes and bring the broth back to a simmer.
- Submerge the halibut portions in the broth. Poach until the halibut is just barely opaque throughout, about 6 minutes. If you are using a thermometer, 135°F (57°C) is perfect. Do not overcook, or the halibut will become dry.

Make the mayonnaise

- While the broth is simmering, in a small bowl, whisk the mayonnaise with the dill, lemon zest, and juice. Add the hot sauce to taste and set aside. (Any leftover lemon mayo can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a week and used for sandwiches or a veggie dip.)

To serve

- Remove the lemongrass stalk and bay leaf from the broth and discard. Spoon a piece of halibut, some vegetables, and some broth into each serving bowl. Season the top of the halibut with a small sprinkle of salt and pepper, a dollop of the lemon dill mayo, and some green scallion slices.

Lemon Lavender Cookies

Makes 36

These lemon lavender cookies have a lovely melt-in-your-mouth texture and a subtle floral flavour. Topped with a simple lemon icing, they are a deceptively simple treat and an easy make-ahead dessert. If you are decorating with lavender buds, use only a few so the texture doesn't overwhelm these delicate cookies.

⅔ cup (160 ml) salted butter, softened
⅔ cup (160 ml) lavender sugar (see Cook's notes)
1 egg
1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla extract
1½ cups (375 ml) all-purpose flour
1½ tsp (7.5 ml) baking powder
1 cup (250 ml) icing sugar
Pinch of fine salt
2 Tbsp (30 ml) lemon juice
2 tsp (10 ml) water
Lavender buds, decorative sugar sprinkles, or nonpareils, for decoration (optional)

- Place the butter and lavender sugar in a large bowl and use an electric mixer to beat on high speed until well creamed. Add the egg and vanilla and beat until combined.
- In a separate bowl, mix the flour and baking powder together, then add them to the lavender butter mixture. Beat in the flour on low speed just until the cookie dough is smooth.
- Dump the dough out onto a sheet of parchment. Grease your hands with butter and shape the dough into a 12-inch (30 cm) long log, rolling it in the parchment. Twist the ends to secure them and place it in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours, or up to 1 week. (See Cook's notes.)
- Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper.
- Slice the cookie dough into ¼-inch (0.5 cm) thick disks. Place them on the prepared cookie sheets, 2 inches (5 cm) apart. Bake for 8 minutes for lighter-coloured, softer cookies, or up to 10 minutes for crispier cookies with lightly browned edges.

- Remove the cookies from the oven, let cool on the pan for 3–5 minutes, and then use a spatula to transfer them to a wire cooling rack to finish cooling.
- Meanwhile, in a small bowl, mix together the icing sugar, salt, lemon juice, and water until smooth. The icing should be thin enough to spread over the cookies but thick enough not to drip off.
- Spread a thin layer of icing on each cookie. Top with a tiny bit of lavender or other edible decorations, if using, while the icing is still wet. Let the icing set and then serve.

Cook’s notes

You can make the dough for these buttery, fragrant cookies ahead of time. Wrap the parchment log in plastic wrap to prevent it from drying out and store it in the refrigerator for up to a week or the freezer for up to 3 months.

To make your own lavender sugar, process 1 tablespoon (15 ml) of lavender buds per cup (250 ml) of granulated sugar in a food processor or blender.

Fir Tip Tea

Makes 4 cups (1 L)

After a long, cold winter, it’s so exciting to see green growth and start foraging again. Spruce and fir tips are rich in vitamin C and have a bold, unique flavour that tastes like the Pacific Northwest to me, with notes of citrus, mint, and sweet pine. This tea pairs particularly well with buttery lemon lavender cookies (page 47) and delicately flavoured cakes.

4 cups (1 L) water
1 cup (250 ml) fir tips
Honey, to serve

- Bring the water to a boil. Place the fir tips in a teapot and pour in the water. Replace the lid of the teapot and let the tea steep for 5 minutes. Pour the tea through a strainer into teacups, breathing in the invigorating steam, and sweeten to taste with honey.

Cook’s notes

Tea is the simplest way to use fir tips, but you can make a lovely syrup, infused vodka, or infused vinegar with them too.

When they are especially young and tender, add fir tips to salads or stir-fries.

Different species of spruce and fir have subtle flavour differences. Grand fir, for example, has a distinct grapefruit flavour! Harvest sustainably by taking just a few tips from each tree and enjoy the flavour of the forest in a mug.

Menu Three Easter Celebration

SERVES 4

- Garden Salad with Peas and Cheddar Crisps
- Garlic Sautéed Fiddleheads
- Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, and Thyme No-Knead Bread
- Niçoise-Style Sheet Pan Chicken
- Saskatoon Berry Cupcakes
- Strawberry and Nootka Rose Shrub

This isn’t a typical heavy Easter dinner. It’s a thoughtful celebration menu full of special ingredients unique to spring—including shelling peas. A spring garden wouldn’t be complete without them. They are quick and easy to grow, making them a great crop for kids. The soft tips and flowers are sweet and tasty in salads or as a garnish for other dishes. Fiddleheads are fleeting, often available for just a few weeks and make a delicious, crisp side dish for the hearty sheet pan roast chicken. Strawberries are another joy in the kitchen garden at this time of year. Like tomatoes, homegrown or locally grown strawberries picked at peak ripeness taste unlike any store-bought berries sold out of season. In this menu, they pair sweetly with Nootka rose petals for a refreshing drink to start or finish your meal. Tender Saskatoon berry cupcakes with tangy lemon frosting make a perfect dessert.

Garden Salad with Peas and Cheddar Crisps Serves

Serves 4

In spring, arugula and sorrel are the first greens to pop up in my garden. Chives, mint, and parsley are hot on their heels, followed shortly after by asparagus and peas. The fun of this salad is foraging in your garden for enough greens to make a salad while the weather

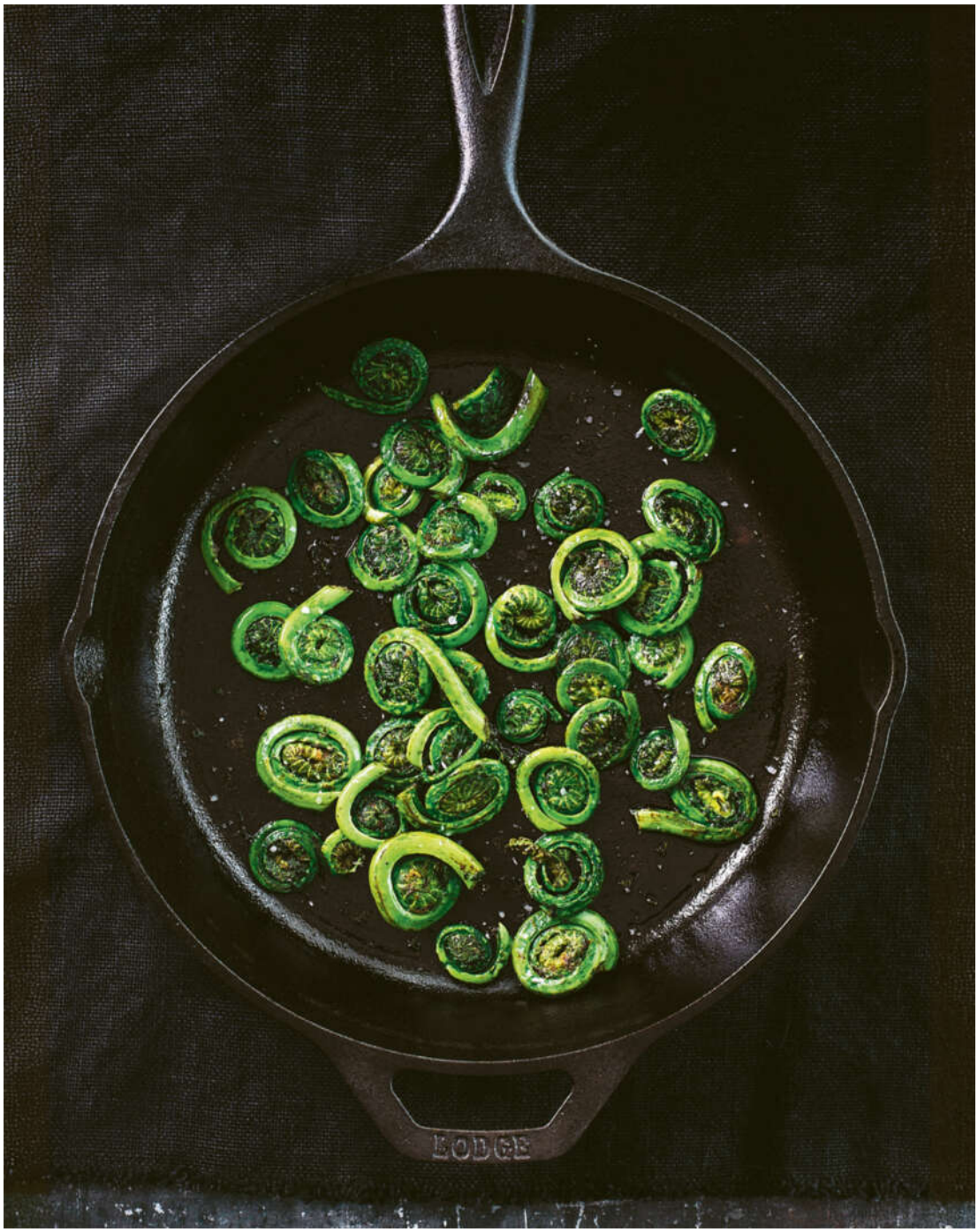
is still cool and the ground is just waking up. A classic French-style dressing and salty cheese crisps tie it all together.

1 cup (250 ml) shredded medium cheddar cheese
2 Tbsp (30 ml) minced shallot
1 Tbsp (15 ml) red wine vinegar
1 Tbsp (15 ml) drained capers
1 Tbsp (15 ml) Dijon mustard
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper
¼ cup (60 ml) olive oil
Sea salt to taste
8 cups (2 L) assorted garden greens and soft herbs
1 cup (250 ml) shelled peas
1 cup (250 ml) snow peas, cut in half diagonally if large

- Warm a small or medium non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Scatter a handful of the shredded cheese around the middle of the pan in a thin layer. Let it melt and bubble until the bottom gets darker and the cheese looks frilly. Transfer the cheese to a cutting board and use a large chef’s knife to cut it into wedges. Let cool until crisp, then set aside. Repeat until you’ve used up all the cheese.
- In a small bowl or mason jar, stir together the shallots and vinegar. Add the capers, mustard, pepper, and oil and whisk or shake until emulsified. Taste and add salt as needed.
- Place the salad greens and peas in a large bowl and dress with half the vinaigrette. Toss and add more dressing to your taste. Serve in bowls garnished with the cheese crisps.

Garlic Sautéed Fiddleheads

Serves 4



Fiddleheads need to be cooked for a minimum of 10 minutes to make them safe for consumption. Rather than boil them and then fry them, I like to do it all in one pan. This hearty veggie retains its crisp texture and bright colour after cooking.

2 Tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
½ tsp (2.5 ml) sea salt
2 cups (500 ml) fiddleheads, washed and trimmed of any loose husks or debris
1 clove garlic
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground pepper

- Warm a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Add the oil, ½ cup (125 ml) of water, and the salt. When the liquid starts to bubble, add the fiddleheads and let them cook, stirring occasionally, until all the water has evaporated, about 10 minutes.
- Reduce the heat to low and add the garlic and pepper. Toss and cook until the garlic is translucent, about 2–3 minutes, before seasoning with extra salt to taste and serving.

Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, and Thyme No-Knead Bread

Makes 1 large loaf

This artisanal-style bread uses only one bowl and one measuring cup and is on regular rotation at my house with different flavour variations. Use as many or as few herbs as you like. You can bake it up in an afternoon or let it ferment slowly overnight in the refrigerator

and bake it the next day. A heavy cast iron enamelled pot with an ovenproof lid is essential for this recipe. (A Dutch oven is ideal.)

1½ cups (375 ml) warm water
2½ tsp (12.5 ml) dry active yeast
1 tsp (5 ml) kosher salt
3 cups (750 ml) all-purpose flour
½ cup (125 ml) fresh chopped curly or flat-leaf parsley
1 tsp (5 ml) chopped fresh rosemary
1 tsp (5 ml) chopped fresh thyme
½ tsp (2.5 ml) chopped fresh sage

- Place the water in a large bowl. It should be able to hold at least 16 cups (4 L). Sprinkle in the yeast, stir, and let sit until it starts to foam, about 10 minutes. If the mixture doesn't foam, the yeast is no longer active and will have to be discarded. You'll have to start again with fresh yeast.
- Stir in the salt, followed by the flour and herbs. Stir well until the dough is a ragged texture and fully combined.
- Cover the bowl loosely with beeswax or plastic wrap and place in a warm, draft-free spot to rise until tripled in volume, 3–4 hours. The time will vary according to the temperature in your house and humidity levels.
- Place a 16-cup (4 L) or larger enamelled cast iron pot with oven-proof lid in the oven and set the oven to 450°F (230°C) to preheat, about 20–30 minutes.
- While the pot is heating, transfer the dough to a floured surface and fold the edges into the centre a few times to form a tight round ball. Add more flour if it's too sticky, then flip the dough ball onto a large piece of parchment paper with the smooth side up. Lightly flour the top and let it rise for ½ hour until the pot is hot.
- Using oven mitts, carefully remove the hot pot from the oven and take the lid off. Lift the dough (still on the parchment) into

the pot and replace the lid. Bake for 25 minutes. The bread will have risen and set but will not have started to brown. Remove the lid and continue to bake the bread until the crust is golden brown, 10–15 minutes.

- Let the bread cool in the pot for 10 minutes, then remove it from the parchment paper and lift it onto a wire rack to cool for at least 30 more minutes before slicing and serving.

Variations

Substitute 1 cup (250 ml) whole wheat or whole grain flour for 1 cup (250 ml) of the all-purpose flour. This variation makes a slightly denser but very delicious, hearty loaf.

Omit all the herbs except the rosemary and add ½ cup (125 ml) pitted and chopped kalamata olives to the dough.

Grated hard cheese or crumbled feta, chopped dry figs, and chives are other great additions. Use ¼–1 cup (60–250 ml) of your chosen addition to taste. (When you're estimating how much to use, factor in the strength of the ingredient. For example, if I'm using cheese, I use about 1 cup/250 ml. If I'm using chives, which have a relatively strong flavour, I keep it down to about ¼ cup/60 ml.)

Baking time for these variations remains the same.

Niçoise-Style Sheet Pan Chicken

Serves 4

This gorgeous and flavourful sheet pan dinner is inspired by the Niçoise salads in the south of France. Don’t be put off by the long ingredient list. I’ve broken the recipe into sections to make it more manageable, and the chicken can be marinated up to 1 day ahead.

Chicken marinade

3 Tbsp (45 ml) caper juice
2 Tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
6 large sprigs of thyme
1 tsp (5 ml) dried oregano
1 tsp (5 ml) fine salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper

Pan roast

4 bone-in chicken legs (skin on, drumstick and thigh attached)
2 cups (500 ml) new potatoes
1 cup (250 ml) radishes
1 cup (250 ml) asparagus (about 8–10 spears)
1 lemon, sliced into ¼-inch (0.5 cm) rounds

Garnish

4 eggs
2 Tbsp (30 ml) drained capers
½ cup (125 ml) Niçoise olives

Dressing

¼ cup (60 ml) extra virgin olive oil
2 Tbsp (30 ml) sherry vinegar or red wine vinegar
1 Tbsp (15 ml) Dijon mustard 1 anchovy fillet
1 clove garlic, minced
2 Tbsp (30 ml) minced shallot
1 tsp (5 ml) coarsely chopped fresh thyme leaves
½ tsp (2.5 ml) fine salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper

Marinate the chicken

- To make the marinade, combine the caper juice, olive oil, garlic, thyme, oregano, salt, and pepper in a large bowl or resealable

bag. Add the chicken legs, seal the bag, and mix the marinade around well. Place the bag in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour, and up to 1 day before you plan to cook the chicken.

Cook the chicken

- Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Line a large, rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper or aluminum foil.
- Remove the chicken from the marinade, shaking off any excess, place it on the prepared baking sheet, and slide it into the oven.
- Meanwhile, wash and halve the potatoes, wash the radishes and halve any large ones, and trim the woody ends off the asparagus.
- Once the chicken has been cooking for 20 minutes, remove the tray from the oven and add the potatoes, radishes, and lemon slices, tossing them in the drippings. Return the tray to the oven and cook for another 20 minutes. Add the asparagus, toss it with the other veggies, and return the tray to the oven for 10 more minutes.

Prepare the garnish

- While the chicken is cooking, boil a pot of water and prepare an ice bath.
- Lower the eggs gently into the boiling water and boil for 6–7 minutes, depending on how soft you want the yolks. Transfer them to the ice bath for 5 minutes to stop the cooking. Peel and set aside.

Make the dressing and assemble the dish

- In a small bowl, whisk together the oil, vinegar, mustard, anchovy, shallots, thyme, salt, and pepper.
- Once the chicken is cooked, leave it and the vegetables on the baking sheet, top with the capers, olives, and halved eggs, then drizzle the dressing over and serve it family-style.

Cook’s notes

This recipe can easily be doubled but you’ll need an extra baking sheet so the ingredients aren’t overcrowded.

Saskatoon Berry Cupcakes

Makes 12

The star of these tender lemon-scented cupcakes is sweet and slightly tart Saskatoon berries. A lemon butter frosting tops them off. Garnish with extra berries or tiny violets from your garden for a pretty presentation. Bring your ingredients to room temperature before starting.

Cupcakes

2 cups (500 ml) all-purpose flour
1 tsp (5 ml) baking powder
½ tsp (2.5 ml) baking soda
½ tsp (2.5 ml) fine salt
½ cup (125 ml) unsalted butter, softened
1 cup (250 ml) granulated sugar
2 eggs
2 tsp (10 ml) grated lemon zest
1 cup (250 ml) buttermilk (see Cook's note, page 195)
1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla extract
1½ cups (375 ml) Saskatoon berries

Frosting

2 cups (500 ml) icing sugar
½ cup (125 ml) unsalted butter
1 tsp (5 ml) grated lemon zest
¼ tsp (1 ml) fine salt
2 Tbsp (30 ml) lemon juice
Violets and extra Saskatoon berries, for garnish (optional)

Make the cupcakes

- Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a 12-cup muffin tin with extra-large cupcake liners.
- In a medium bowl, mix together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. In a larger bowl, cream the butter with the sugar until pale and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Add the eggs, lemon zest, buttermilk, and vanilla, and beat again on medium until well mixed, about 2 more minutes.

- Add the flour mixture to the butter mixture and beat on low speed just until combined. Using a spatula, stir in the Saskatoon berries until evenly distributed.
- Divide the batter equally between the twelve cupcake liners (they will be about three-quarters full), then bake until a toothpick inserted in the centre of a cupcake comes out clean, about 20–25 minutes. Remove from the oven, let cool in the muffin tin for 10 minutes, and then remove the cupcakes to a wire rack to finish cooling completely before frosting.

Make the frosting

- Place the icing sugar, butter, lemon zest, salt, and lemon juice in a medium bowl. Beat on low speed until the sugar starts to incorporate, about 30 seconds, then increase the speed to medium and beat until the frosting is fluffy and smooth. Add extra icing sugar if necessary to make the frosting as thick as you want it.
- Spread or pipe the frosting over the cupcakes. Garnish the tops with violets or Saskatoon berries, if using, before serving.
- Serve within 2 hours or store in an airtight container, frosted but not garnished, for up to 2 days.

Strawberry and Nootka Rose Shrub

Makes about 3 cups (750 ml)

Nootka roses produce beautiful fragrant flowers and tart rosehips. This recipe uses the petals to flavour apple cider vinegar along with strawberries. Once you master the recipe, try other variations with lavender, blackberries, raspberries, blueberries, or slices of fresh ginger.

1 lb (500 g) strawberries
2 cups (500 ml) granulated sugar
1 cup (250 ml) Nootka rose petals
2 cups (500 ml) apple cider vinegar

- Chop the strawberries and place them in a medium bowl. Add the sugar and rose petals. Stir well, cover them loosely, and let them macerate at room temperature for 1 hour.
- Add the vinegar and stir until any remaining sugar is dissolved. Cover loosely again and let it sit at room temperature for 6 hours or pop it in the refrigerator overnight.
- Strain the shrub into a glass jar with an airtight lid and keep refrigerated for up to 3 months.
- Serve 2 oz (60 ml) or more in a glass topped with soda water or plain water or in cocktails with gin, rum, or vodka.

Gardener’s notes

I have a gorgeous wild Nootka rose bush in my backyard. It produces hundreds of flowers through spring and summer and then offers loads of vitamin C–rich rosehips in the fall. If you stroll along beaches in the Pacific Northwest, you’ll often find these sweet wild rose bushes nearby. It’s easy to gather plenty of the small edible roses or rosehips for salads, cakes, cookies, and even mixing into bath salts.

Strawberries can be grown in containers, so even if you have only a deck or patio, this is a great crop to grow.

Menu Four In Praise of Parents

SERVES 4

- Dungeness Crab Salad with Cilantro and Mint
- Thai Coconut Curried Whole Spot Prawns
- Thai Green Curry Paste
- Balsamic Roast Strawberries with Sweet Cream
- Biscuits
- Thai Mojito

Both Mother's Day and Father's Day are celebrated in the spring, and this is a delicious way to show your parents how much they mean to you. I'm a former commercial fisher, so this menu has a special place in my heart and I think the time spent making the herb-rich curry makes the love shine through.

Catching spot prawns is possibly the nicest fishery there is, as they are often found in inlets and bays in the most scenic, uninhabited places. Spot prawns are the largest species of shrimp found on the West Coast and many people (myself included) prefer them over lobster. Whether you steam, grill, or poach them, they have the most flavour when cooked whole. That can be tricky, because once you take them out of the water, you need to keep them on ice and use them before their heads turn black and their meat turns mushy. When they are in season, bring a cooler with ice with you to the local fisherman's wharf and plan to use them right away. Otherwise, pop whole prawns into freezer-safe bags and place in the freezer, or snap the tails off to prevent blackening, cover, and refrigerate for up to 3 days.

Dungeness Crab Salad with Cilantro and Mint

Serves 4

I love crab and am quite happy to shell and eat it as is, but if I’m lucky enough to get some extra crab, I love to make this fresh salad. With lots of herbs, lime juice, and a bit of spice, the Thai flavours really highlight the sweetness of Dungeness crab. For a few years, I got to fish with my brother. With me fresh out of cooking school and

him back from working in ski-town restaurants, the crab cooking competition got competitive. I don’t remember who won the final competition but the skipper and official taste tester (our dad) was probably the ultimate winner.

Dressing

2 Tbsp (30 ml) vegetable oil
1 Tbsp (15 ml) lime juice
2 tsp (10 ml) honey
2 tsp (10 ml) fish sauce
½ tsp (2.5 ml) sriracha
1 clove garlic, minced
½ tsp (2.5 ml) grated ginger
½ tsp (2.5 ml) grated lime zest

Salad

½ cup (125 ml) radishes
1 cup (250 ml) asparagus (about 8 stalks)
¼ cup (60 ml) red onion
1 avocado
½ cup (125 ml) cilantro
½ cup (125 ml) fresh mint
1 cup (250 ml) fresh crabmeat, picked over

Make the dressing

- In a small bowl, whisk together the dressing ingredients. Taste and adjust with additional fish sauce or lime juice as required.

Make the salad

- Slice the radishes as thinly as possible and place them in a medium bowl. Trim the ends of the asparagus and then shave each stalk into the bowl, using a vegetable peeler to get thin ribbons. Thinly slice the red onion and add it to the bowl as well. Spoon in 3 tablespoons (45 ml) of dressing and gently toss the vegetables.

- Thinly slice the avocado and coarsely chop the cilantro and mint, reserving a few leaves for garnish. Add the avocado, herbs, crabmeat, and remaining dressing to the bowl and toss gently. Scatter the reserved herbs on top before serving.

Thai Coconut Curried Whole Spot Prawns

Serves 4

This recipe is based on the Thai curry I learned to make while travelling through Thailand. Fresh prawns were simmered in a rich, spicy broth flavoured with so many herbs. To eat it, we broke the prawns in half and peeled the tail. After eating the tails, we slurped up the sweet, salty juice from the prawn heads before discarding the

shells. If you prefer red curry paste, you can use that instead of the green I've listed here.

1½ cups (375 ml) jasmine rice
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
3 Tbsp (45 ml) vegetable oil, divided
3 Tbsp (45 ml) Thai green curry paste (see page 75) or your favourite store-bought Thai curry paste
¾ cup (185 ml) diced yellow onion
1 cup (250 ml) thinly sliced red bell pepper
2 cans (each 398 ml) full-fat coconut milk
2 cups (500 ml) chicken stock
2 Tbsp (30 ml) fish sauce
1 Tbsp (15 ml) lime juice
2 Tbsp (30 ml) granulated sugar
2 lb (1 kg) whole spot prawns or 1 lb (500 g) prawn or shrimp tails
1 cup (250 ml) snap peas
Lime cheeks, basil, and cilantro leaves, for garnish (optional)

- In a 2-quart (2 L) saucepan, combine the rice with 3 cups (750 ml) water, the salt, and 1 tablespoon (15 ml) oil. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer until the water has been absorbed and the rice is cooked, about 20 minutes. Remove from the heat, fluff with a fork, and let sit for 5 minutes with the lid ajar.
- While the rice cooks, warm the remaining 2 tablespoons (30 ml) oil in a large saucepan over low heat. Add the curry paste and cook it for 2 minutes, stirring frequently. Add the onions and cook until translucent, stirring occasionally. Add the bell pepper and cook, stirring constantly, until the pepper begins to soften, about 2 more minutes.
- Pour in the coconut milk, chicken stock, fish sauce, lime juice, and sugar. Increase the heat to medium-high and bring the curry broth to a light boil. Taste and adjust the seasoning with sugar, fish sauce, and lime juice as required.

- Add the prawns and snap peas. Cook just until the prawns are barely cooked through, 2–4 minutes.
- Spoon rice into each bowl, then ladle the prawn curry over and garnish with lime cheeks and herbs, if using.

Cook’s notes

Fish sauce can be a daunting ingredient because of its funky strong smell, but I promise it mellows dramatically once mixed in with other ingredients and it’s essential for an authentic Thai flavour.

Thai Green Curry Paste

Makes about 1 cup (250 ml)

Thai curry paste is a fantastic way to use tons of fresh herbs from your garden. Make it in the late spring and summer when basil is plentiful and freeze it in small containers for an easy meal in the winter. I've made a few substitutes for ingredients that can be hard to find on the West Coast: lime zest instead of kaffir lime leaves, ginger in place of galangal, and jalapeños in place of hot Thai chilies. If you happen to have these authentic ingredients, use them instead of my substitutes.

4 cloves garlic
¼ cup (60 ml) finely diced jalapeño peppers
3 Tbsp (45 ml) minced shallot
2 stalks of lemongrass, tough outer leaves peeled and the softer core sliced crosswise
1 tsp (5 ml) grated ginger
1 tsp (5 ml) grated lime zest
1 cup (250 ml) fresh basil leaves
½ cup (125 ml) cilantro leaves
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
⅓ cup (80 ml) vegetable oil

- In a food processor fitted with the steel blade, pulse the garlic, jalapeños, shallots, lemongrass, ginger, lime zest, basil, cilantro, and salt until you see a fine, paste-like texture. Then, with the food processor running, drizzle in the oil and process until blended.
- If you aren't using the curry paste right away, place it in an airtight container and drizzle with just enough vegetable oil to cover the top and prevent oxidation. Store it in your refrigerator for up to 4 days or in the freezer for up to 4 months.

Cook's notes

To make a red curry, use your favourite spicy small red Thai chilies instead of the jalapeños and omit the basil.

Balsamic Roast Strawberries with Sweet Cream

Serves 4

The flavour of strawberries gets deeper and sweeter when roasted, as does the balsamic vinegar that complements them so well. Black pepper adds mild spice and sour cream sweetened with a touch of brown sugar echoes the caramelized flavour of the berries while adding a creamy tart contrast to this easy dessert.

1½ lb (750 g) strawberries
3 Tbsp (45 ml) balsamic vinegar
2 Tbsp (30 ml) honey
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground black pepper
3 Tbsp (45 ml) brown sugar
Pinch of salt
2 tsp (10 ml) vanilla extract
1 cup (250 ml) sour cream
Biscuits (see next page, optional)

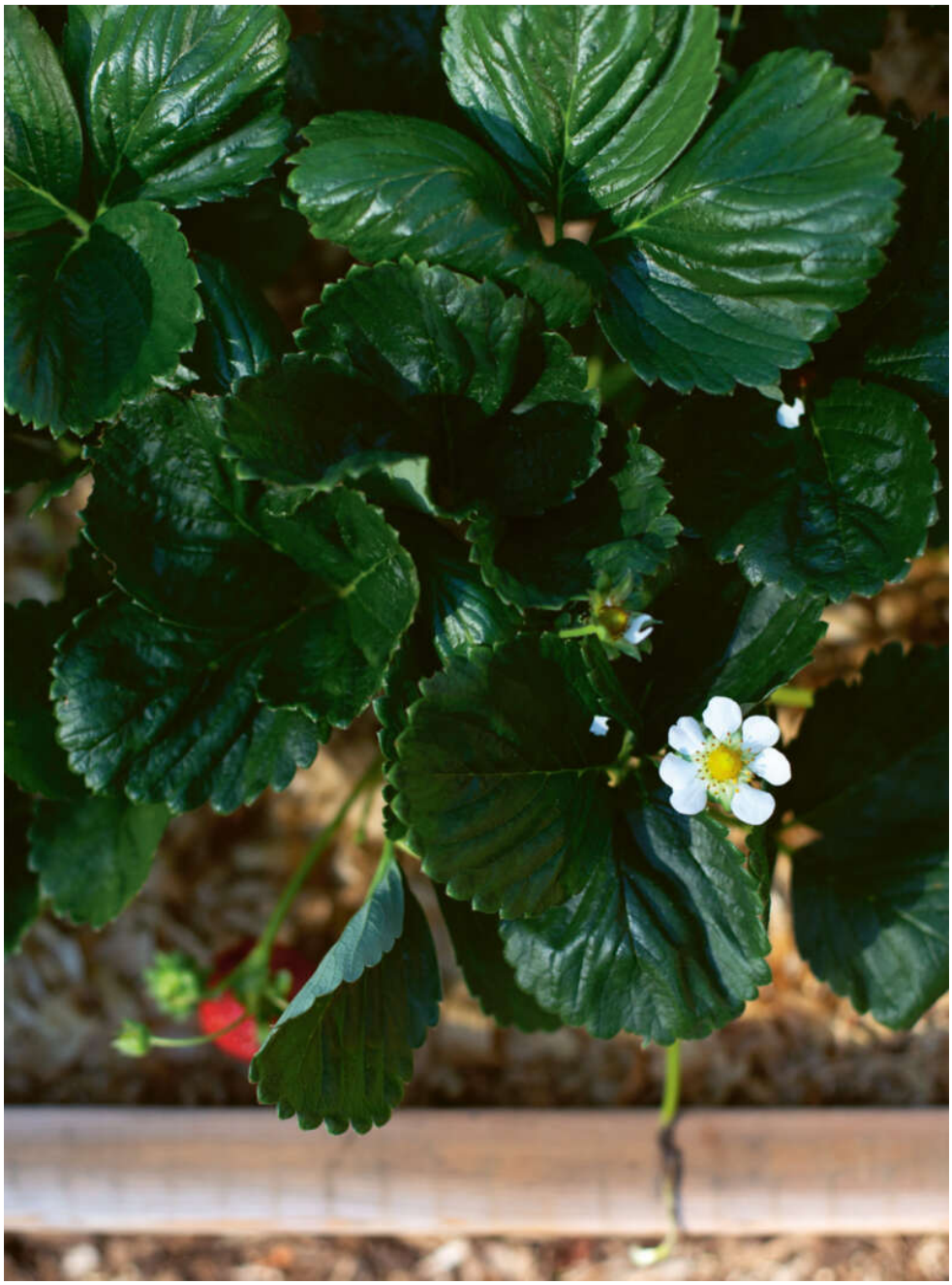
- Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
- Trim the stems off the strawberries, leaving a few nice ones for garnish if you like, as they’re edible. Place the strawberries on the prepared baking sheet. Drizzle the balsamic vinegar and honey over top and sprinkle with the pepper. Toss to coat and spread them evenly around the tray. Roast, stirring the berries once at the 10-minute point, until sweet and somewhat shrunken, 20 minutes.
- In a small bowl, stir the sugar and salt with the vanilla to dissolve. Fold in the sour cream.
- Divide the sweet cream among four serving bowls. Top with warm roasted strawberries and serve with biscuits on the side, if using.

Biscuits

Makes 12

2 cups (500 ml) all-purpose flour
⅓ cup (80 ml) granulated sugar, divided
1 Tbsp (15 ml) baking powder
½ cup (125 ml) salted butter, cold, cubed
¾ cup (185 ml) 2% or whole milk, plus extra for brushing biscuits

- Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Lightly flour a work surface.
- In a large bowl, stir together the flour, ¼ cup (60 ml) of the sugar, and the baking powder. Add the butter and then use a pastry blender or two knives to chop it into small, pea-sized pieces in the flour. Make a well in the centre of the flour mixture, pour in the milk, and mix gently, just until the flour mixture is moistened.
- Press the dough together gently with your hands and turn out onto the floured work surface. Knead it gently three to four times, just until the dough sticks together. Roll the dough out to about 1 inch (2.5 cm) thick and then use a 2-inch (5 cm) cookie cutter or glass to cut it into rounds.
- Place the dough rounds on the prepared baking sheet, about 1 inch (2.5 cm) apart. Brush the tops of the biscuits with milk and then sprinkle with the remaining sugar.
- Bake until the edges are golden brown and they are cooked through when a toothpick inserted comes out clean, 12–14 minutes.



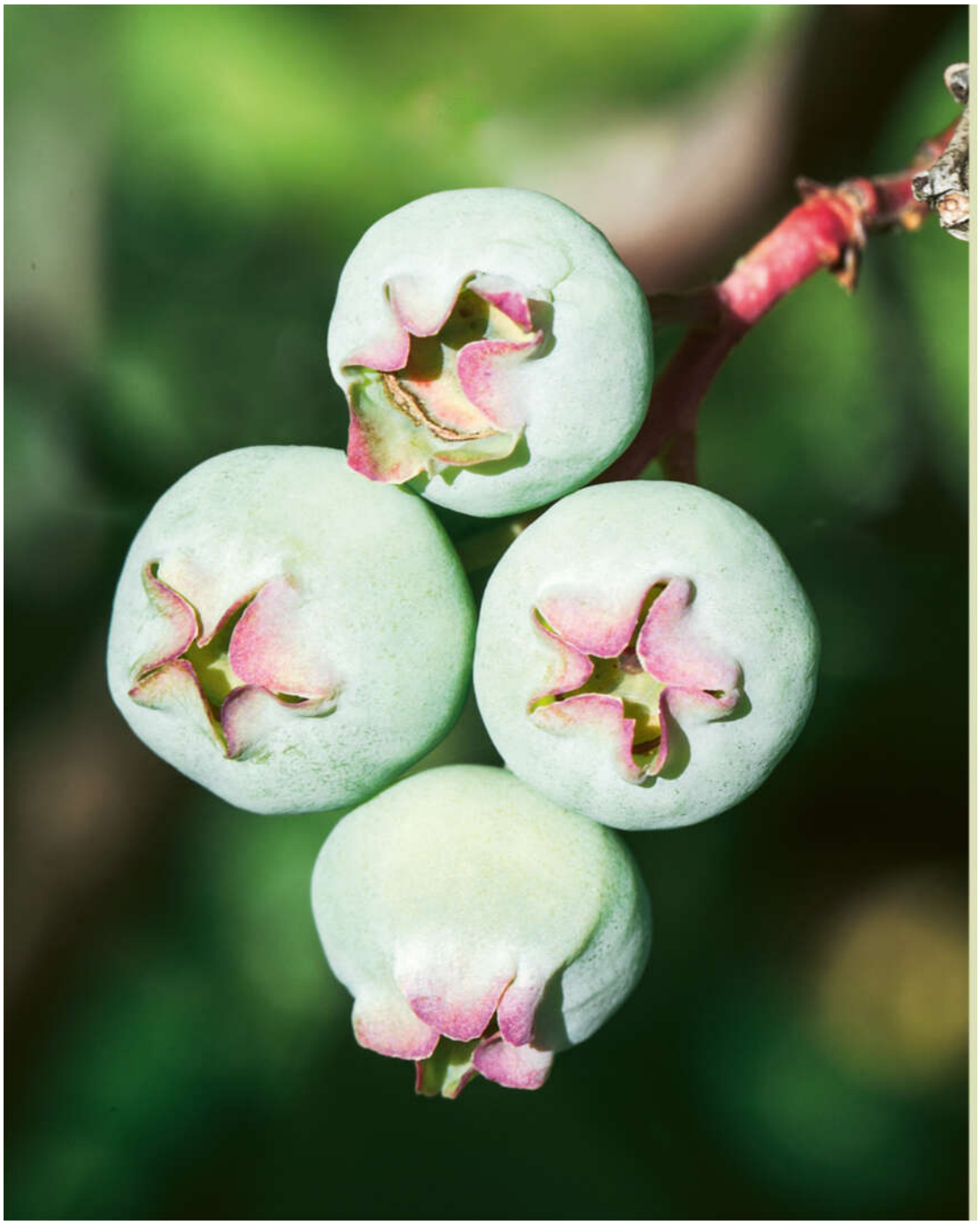
Thai Mojito

Serves 4

The citrusy cilantro and peppery basil give this Cuban classic a surprising and tasty Thai twist. It’s a fun drink to enjoy with this Southeast Asian–inspired menu.

¼ cup (60 ml) granulated sugar
4 sprigs of mint (about 12 leaves)
4 sprigs of cilantro (about 20 leaves)
4 sprigs of basil (about 12 leaves)
Ice cubes
½ cup (125 ml) lime juice (4–6 limes)
8 oz (250 ml) white rum
16 oz (500 ml) club soda
Extra herb sprigs and lime wedges, for garnish

- In a pitcher, combine the sugar, mint, cilantro, and basil and muddle until the herbs are bruised and fragrant.
- Add ice to four glasses.
- Add 2 cups (500 ml) of ice to the pitcher, then pour in the lime juice, followed by the rum. Stir well until chilled and then strain equally into the prepared glasses. Top each with about ½ cup (125 ml) of soda, stir once, garnish with fresh sprigs of herbs and a wedge of lime, and serve.



Menu 5 Dinner in the Herb Garden

SERVES 4

- French Sorrel Soup
- Arugula Salad with Goat Cheese and Honey
- Pork Chops with Pickled Rhubarb
- Potatoes with Green Garden Sauce
- Lavender Blueberry Crème Brûlée
- Blueberry Bellini

This menu is loaded with herbs, from the soup through to the lavender-infused crème brûlée. Sorrel is a rewarding plant to grow—plant it once and it will return faithfully every year. Its leaves are mild and tender with a distinct lemon flavour, and it's delicious both raw in salad and cooked in soups and sauces. Early arugula is mild in the cool months of spring and is a hearty base for chive-studded goat cheese balls. Pork chops pair up with sweet and sour rhubarb and new potatoes bathed in a herbaceous green sauce. By late June, blueberries are starting to emerge and they star in the cocktail and dessert.

French Sorrel Soup

Serves 4

An early spring green, sorrel is incredibly versatile. It makes a bright-tasting addition to salads, is a key ingredient in a traditional sauce for salmon, and is used in soups such as green borscht in Europe. You can serve this soup hot or cold. Don’t be alarmed by the deep olive-green colour. Unfortunately, sorrel doesn’t retain its vibrant green colour after cooking.

5 cups (1.25 L) sorrel
¼ cup (60 ml) unsalted butter
1 cup (250 ml) sliced leeks
1 cup (250 ml) peeled, diced russet potato
4 cups (1 L) chicken stock
2 egg yolks
½ cup (125 ml) whipping cream
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper
Fresh croutons, shelled peas or pea shoots, snipped chives, chervil, baby sorrel, or mâche, for garnish (optional)

- Wash and trim the sorrel leaves, removing and discarding any brown stringy stems. Roll the leaves together and slice thinly into a chiffonade.
- Place the butter in a large saucepan over medium-low heat. Once it has melted, add the leeks. Sauté until soft and translucent, about 4 minutes, then add the sorrel and cook until it is wilted, 1–2 minutes.
- Add the potatoes and stock and bring to a simmer. Continue to cook on medium-low until the potatoes are soft, about 20 minutes. Reduce the heat to low and mash the potatoes with a potato masher or fork until they’re a coarse purée.
- In a medium bowl, whisk the egg yolks into the cream. Whisk in a ladle of hot soup to temper the mixture. Slowly pour the yolk mixture into the soup, stirring constantly. Return the soup just to a simmer and then remove it from the heat immediately. Add the salt and pepper.

- If you’re serving the soup hot, garnish it according to preference before serving.
- If you’re serving it cold, let it cool and then cover and refrigerate until well chilled. Ladle the cold soup into bowls and serve garnished according to preference.

Cook’s notes

Don’t use an immersion blender to purée this soup. It will make the texture gummy.

Arugula Salad with Goat Cheese and Honey

Serves 4

Spicy greens are the perfect counterpart to the crispy fried herb-spiked goat cheese and honey in this recipe. If you have watercress, use it instead of the arugula. Its pepperiness offers a great contrast to the tangy, creamy goat cheese in this salad. I've used my

favourite variety of thyme—lemon thyme—but any fresh thyme will work.

Dressing

3 Tbsp (45 ml) olive oil
2 Tbsp (30 ml) red wine vinegar
2 Tbsp (30 ml) honey
1 Tbsp (15 ml) chopped lemon thyme leaves
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper

Goat cheese balls

(Makes 10–12 balls)
2 eggs
½ cup (125 ml) panko breadcrumbs
½ cup (140 g package) soft goat cheese
3 Tbsp (45 ml) finely chopped chives
¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground black pepper
Vegetable oil, for frying

Salad

8 cups (2 L) arugula or watercress
½ cup (125 ml) coarsely chopped hazelnuts

Make the dressing

- Whisk together the dressing ingredients and set aside.

Make the goat cheese balls

- In a small bowl, whisk the eggs until light and frothy. Place the panko crumbs in a small, shallow plate beside the eggs.
- In a medium bowl, mix together the goat cheese, chives, salt, and pepper. Using a spoon and your hands, form 1-inch (2.5 cm) balls. Dip the balls in the beaten eggs and then roll in the panko crumbs, pressing gently so they adhere well, then place the balls on a plate.

- Line a plate with paper towels.
- Heat 1 inch (2.5 cm) of vegetable oil in a medium-sized, deep-sided pan to 350°F (176°C) over medium-high heat.
- When the oil is hot enough that a drop of egg wash bubbles and floats right away, place the goat cheese balls in the oil one at a time. You may need to cook them in batches to avoid overcrowding. If so, let the oil come back to temperature in between batches. Turn the balls occasionally so each side gets golden and crispy, about 3 minutes in total. Use a slotted spoon to transfer them to the prepared plate once they’re done.

Assemble the salad

- Place the arugula and hazelnuts in a large bowl and drizzle half of the dressing over top. Toss the leaves, then arrange them on a platter.
- Top the greens with the goat cheese balls and drizzle with the remaining dressing. Serve while the cheese is still warm.

Pork Chops with Pickled Rhubarb

Serves 4

The farmers’ market is a great spot to source high-quality pork. If you’re making a special meal, choose nice thick-cut, bone-in chops with a little fat around the edges. The fat keeps the inside moist and juicy while offering some crispy, charred bits around the edges. In this recipe I pan-fry the chops, but grilling is a great alternative, especially if you’re feeding a crowd.

4 × 8–10 oz (250–300 g) bone-in pork chops
2 tsp (10 ml) coarse sea salt
2 tsp (10 ml) ground black pepper
4 tsp (20 ml) vegetable oil
4 tsp (20 ml) unsalted butter, divided
4 sprigs rosemary, divided
1 clove garlic, chopped, divided
1 cup (250 ml) pickled rhubarb (page 360)

- Season the pork chops generously with the salt and pepper.
- Place the oil in a large cast iron pan and warm over medium-high heat. (You will need to cook these in two batches unless you use two pans to cook them at the same time.) When the oil is hot but not quite smoking, place two chops in the pan and let them sear until deeply browned and half-cooked. This will take about 5–8 minutes, depending on how thick your chops are. Flip them and cook for 3–5 more minutes until they’re cooked to medium-rare (145°F/63°C).
- Add half the butter, two sprigs of rosemary, and half the garlic to the pan. Let everything melt together, then spoon the mixture over the chops while they cook for 1 more minute. Remove the chops from the pan to a plate and pour the rosemary butter from the pan over top. Repeat with the remaining chops, adding a little more oil to the pan if necessary. Let the pork rest for 10 minutes. While the pork is resting, heat the pickled rhubarb in a saucepan.
- Serve the pork chops topped with the warm pickled rhubarb.

Potatoes with Green Garden Sauce

Serves 4

I love this versatile green sauce because you can use whatever herbs are growing when you make it. You can also tweak it to match whatever you're serving it with—more cilantro for a Southwestern flavour, dill for a Nordic dinner, or more rosemary for Mediterranean, etc. This recipe makes more sauce than you need for the potatoes, but extras are perfect in sandwiches, on cooked or raw veggies, or over grilled fish. You can see these featured as a side on page 88.

3 cups (750 ml) new potatoes
2 cups (500 ml) loosely packed mixed soft herbs (any combination of parsley, basil, cilantro, chives, tarragon, chervil, mint, dill, lovage, leaves from rosemary, thyme, or savory, etc.)
3 cloves garlic, crushed
1 Tbsp (15 ml) sliced shallot
½ cup (125 ml) olive oil
3 Tbsp (45 ml) capers or an equal amount of pitted green olives
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper

- Wash the potatoes and if they're large, cut them in half. Fill a pot with enough salted water to cover the potatoes, add the potatoes, cover with a lid, and place over high heat. Once the potatoes come to a boil, reduce the heat to low and let them simmer until they're tender, about 10–15 minutes.
- While the potatoes are cooking, place the herbs, garlic, and shallots in a food processor fitted with a steel blade or in a blender. Pulse until finely chopped.
- Then, with the processor or blender running, drizzle in the oil. Add the capers and pulse until coarsely chopped. Add the salt and pepper. Adjust the seasoning to taste.
- Drain the potatoes, return them to the pot, and spoon ½ cup (125 ml) of green sauce over top. Toss and serve right away, with extra sauce on the side.
- Leftover sauce keeps well in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 days or in the freezer for 3 months.

Lavender Blueberry Crème Brûlée

Serves 4

I’ve always loved crème brûlée. So, when I attended the Culinary Institute in Hyde Park, NY, I was in heaven sampling the other students’ versions almost daily. If you raise laying hens and have lots of eggs, this is a great egg-based dessert. It’s rich, but it’s also loaded with protein and fruit, so I like to consider it balanced. And despite its reputation as a fancy dessert, it’s really straightforward to make. Note that this is a no-bake version.

2 cups (500 ml) whipping cream
1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla extract
3 Tbsp (45 ml) fresh or dried lavender buds
¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
8 egg yolks
6 Tbsp (90 ml) granulated sugar
1 cup (250 ml) fresh blueberries
8 tsp (40 ml) coarse sugar such as sanding, turbinado, or demerara sugar

- Place four 1-cup (250 ml) ramekins on a rimmed baking sheet.
- In a heavy-bottomed saucepan set over low heat, combine the cream, vanilla, lavender, and salt. Bring it to a very low simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes. It will be frothy and fragrant at this point. Remove from the heat and let the lavender steep for 10 minutes before straining the scented cream into a glass measuring cup. Discard the lavender.
- In a medium-sized bowl, whisk the egg yolks with the sugar.
- Slowly pour the warm vanilla cream mixture into the yolks, whisking constantly. Return the mixture to the pot and place it back over low heat. Cook very slowly, stirring frequently, until the custard thickens, about 15 more minutes. Do not let it come to a boil.
- Divide the blueberries equally between the ramekins. Pour the custard over the berries. Place the baking sheet in the refrigerator until set, about 2 hours. (If you’re making them

ahead, cover them with plastic wrap once they are cooled and set.)

- To finish, arrange the oven rack in its highest position and preheat the oven to broil.
- Sprinkle 2 teaspoons (10 ml) of the coarse sugar over each custard, then place the tray under the broiler until the sugar is crisp and well caramelized on top, about 3–5 minutes. Keep a close watch to prevent them from burning. (You can use a kitchen blowtorch to do this if you prefer.)
- Remove the tray from the oven and let the custards cool for 5 minutes before serving.

Cook’s notes

Don’t use frozen blueberries for this recipe. Their juices will bleed into the custard and prevent it from setting properly, and the cream mixture will be a muddy grey colour.

Use a coarse sugar for the topping so that it caramelizes properly.

These can be made up to 2 days ahead of time. Don’t add the coarse sugar topping until just before serving.

Blueberry Bellini

Serves 4

Champagne flutes aren’t built for ice, so chill them in your refrigerator or freezer ahead of time to keep the cocktails cold.

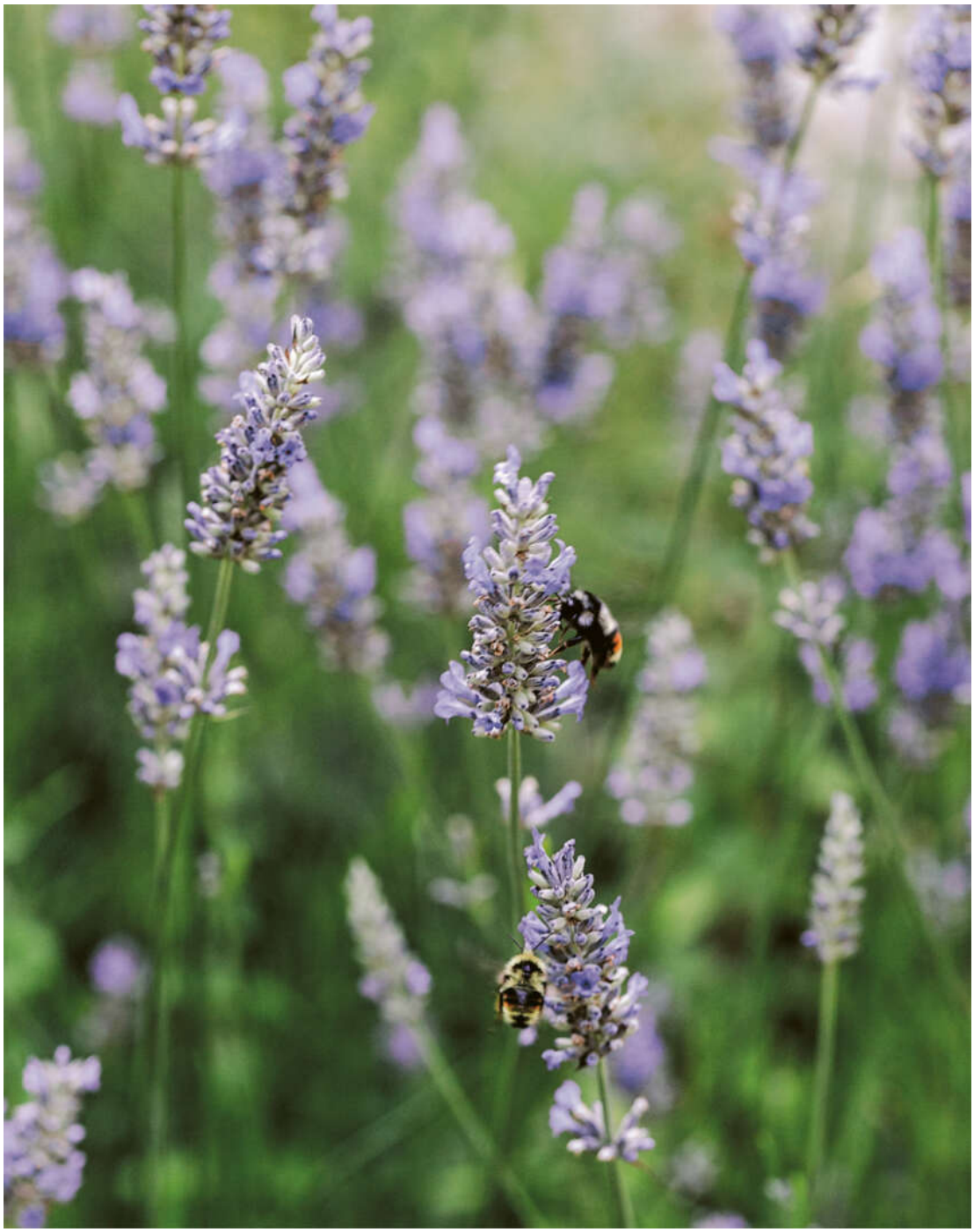
1 cup (250 ml) chilled blueberry syrup
1 (750 ml) bottle of dry sparkling wine
Fresh blueberries, for garnish

- Pour a scant ¼ cup (60 ml) of chilled blueberry syrup into each flute. Top each glass with sparkling wine.
- Thread some blueberries onto a cocktail pick and use as a garnish if you like.

Cook’s notes

To make 1 cup (250 ml) blueberry syrup, bring 1 cup (250 ml) fresh or frozen blueberries, ½ cup (125 ml) water, and ¼ cup (60 ml) granulated sugar to a boil in a small saucepan. Reduce the heat and simmer, stirring frequently, for 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and strain through a mesh sieve into an airtight jar. This will keep refrigerated for up to 4 weeks. Shake well before using.

Summer



SUMMER IN THE GARDEN

In late June through September, there is nowhere I'd rather be than the West Coast. The weather is warm with lake and sea breezes to cool us off and brighter evenings bring us outside after work. The garden is lush, and fruits and veggies are abundant.

If you have any remaining tender starters and seeds, it's time to transplant them into the garden. In late summer, plant fall and winter harvest crops such as Brussels sprouts, broccoli, kale, and onions. They need the warmth of late summer to germinate and get their roots established before the cold sets in.

Fruit starts ripening faster than we can eat it all! First berries, then cherries, followed by figs and stone fruits, and finally, apples and pears. The summer harvest list is long, so try to plan on preserving some fruit to enjoy throughout the year.

Foraging is literally a sweet experience at this time of year, with blackberries, huckleberries, Nootka rose, and elderberries all available in the wild now. You'll often also be able to forage for mushrooms by late summer. (Always be sure to identify mushrooms and other wild foods with 100% certainty before consuming.)

Harvest Now

- Apples and crab apples
- Apricots
- Beets
- Blackberries
- Blueberries
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower

- Celery
- Cherries
- Corn
- Cranberries
- Cucumbers
- Currants
- Eggplant
- Fennel
- Figs
- Garlic
- Gooseberries
- Grapes
- Greens (all)
- Herbs (all)
- Kiwi
- Leeks
- Melons
- Onions and shallots
- Parsnips and turnips
- Peaches and nectarines
- Pears
- Peppers
- Plums
- Pole and string beans
- Potatoes (new)

- Raspberries
- Soybeans and broad beans
- Squash and pumpkins
- Strawberries
- Tomatoes

Forage Now

- Blackberries
- Blueberries
- Chanterelle mushrooms
- Clover
- Common daisy
- Dandelion
- Day lilies
- Elderberries
- Elderflower
- Hazelnuts
- Huckleberries
- Lamb’s quarters
- Lilacs
- Lobster mushrooms
- Nettles (wear gloves)
- Plantain
- Purslane
- Salmon berries

- Samphire (sea asparagus)
- Seaweeds like dulse and bladderwrack
- Sorrel
- Thimbleberries
- Violets
- Walnuts
- Watercress
- Wild roses
- Wild strawberries

Direct-Sow or Transplant Now

- Arugula
- Beets
- Broad beans
- Broccoli and cauliflower
- Brussels sprouts
- Bush and pole beans
- Cabbage
- Chard
- Cress
- Daikon
- Endive
- Fennel
- Kale
- Kohlrabi

- Leeks
- Lettuce
- Melon
- Onions
- Peas
- Radishes
- Rutabaga
- Scallions
- Spinach
- Turnips

Unusual Vegetables

The best part of having a kitchen garden just might be the ability to grow varieties that aren’t available in grocery stores. Over the years, I’ve tried cultivating many unusual vegetables, some more successfully than others, but all fun to try.

Here are some ideas for new veggies to try growing in your garden. They can all be grown in Zones 7–9, and many can withstand much colder temperatures. Choose what suits your own garden's strengths—think about space, sun, and moisture, for example—and add more flavour, colour, and adventure to your garden this year.

GREENS

Mâche, also known as corn salad and lamb's lettuce, is a mild-tasting, slightly tart green with a hint of sweetness. Plant it once and let the last few go to seed. It will then self-sow every year. This tender green is most commonly used in salads and makes a great addition to sandwiches, smoothies, soup, and pesto.

Puntarelle is a unique-looking chicory from Italy. It grows as a bundle of stalks with jagged pointy leaves that look a bit like dandelion leaves—and in fact, puntarelle belongs to the dandelion family. It has a slightly bitter taste with a hint of fennel. The large outer leaves can be used in soup or sautéed. The blanched inner small stalks are delicious when thinly sliced lengthwise and soaked in cold water to form spirals, then drained and tossed with a bold garlic-anchovy dressing.

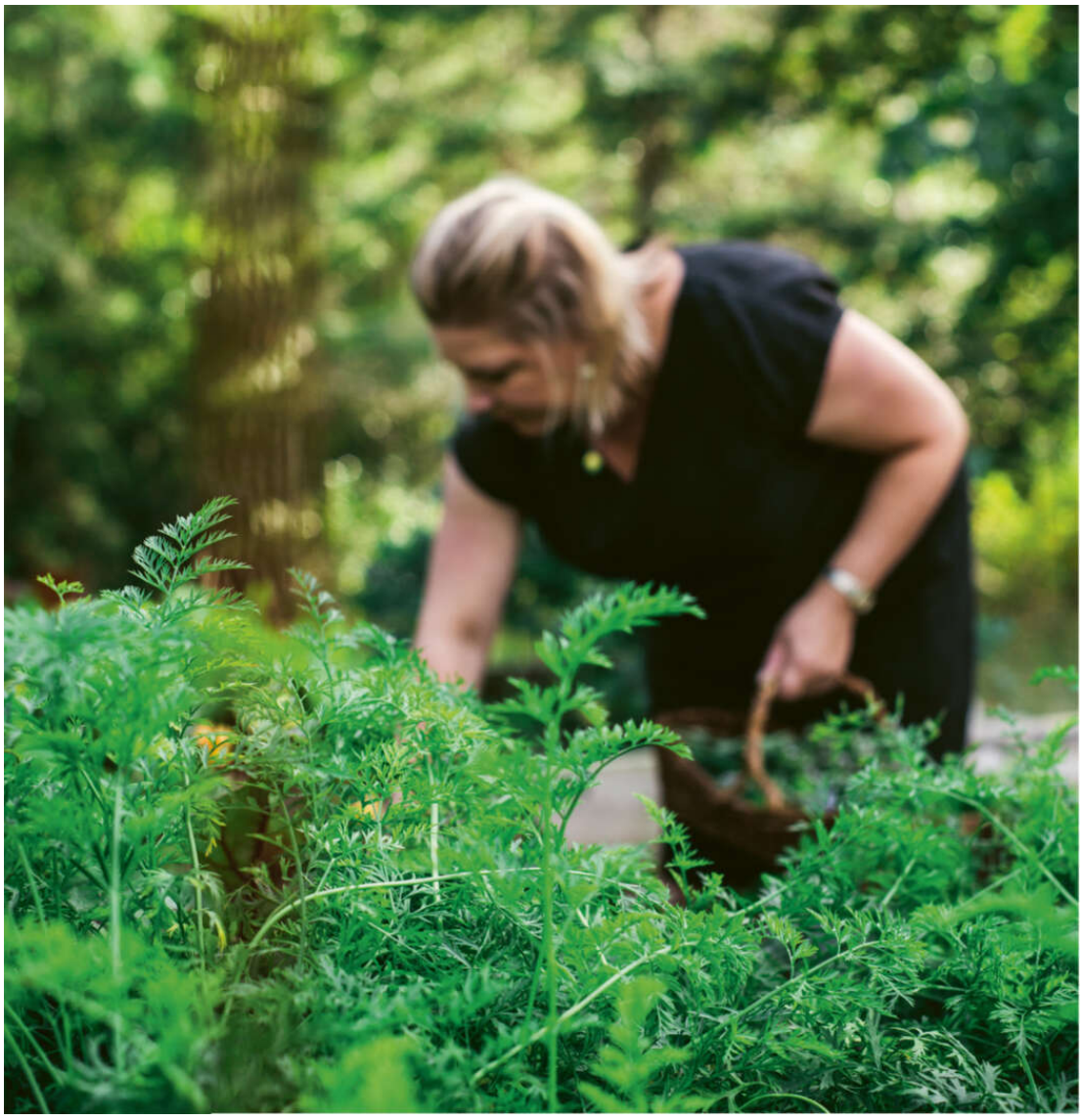
Sorrel is one of my favourites and an easy perennial to grow. Light-tasting with a definite flavour of lemon when served raw, it's probably best known as the star of sorrel soup and salmon with sorrel sauce. This hardy plant starts early in the year and survives light frosts in the fall. Plant it once and it will come back each year in the same spot. It is quite prolific, so one to three plants are plenty for most gardeners.

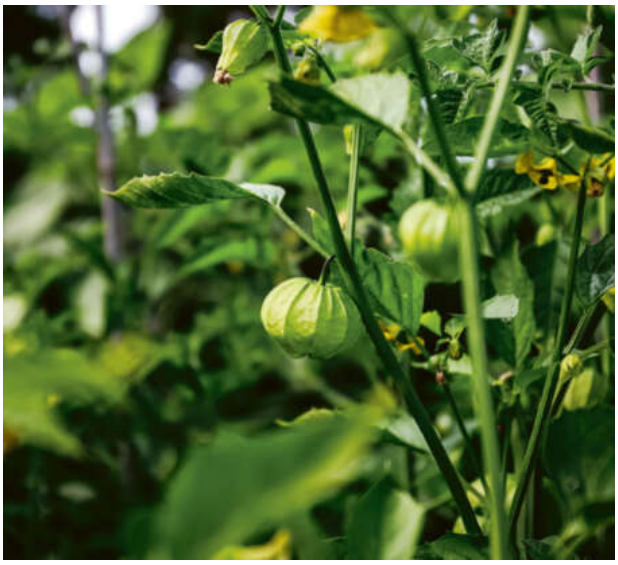
ROOT VEGETABLES

Oca is a compact and attractive plant commonly grown in South American countries and harvested for its starchy root. With a taste somewhere between a potato and a Jerusalem artichoke, oca can be cooked and used like potatoes or eaten raw. It has a bit of lemon

flavour (from the oxalic acid, just like its relative sorrel), and the leaves work well in salads.

Lotus root won't be for everyone, but if you have a pond and you live in Zones 4–10, it can be for you. It's an easy pond crop to grow, but you'll need to protect it from freezing in the winter. You might recognize this beautiful tuber from the images on bags of fancy chips or the garnish on sushi. It has a pattern of holes in the middle that give it a striking look when sliced crosswise. Small young roots can be eaten raw, but more mature ones should be cooked.





White salsify (true salsify) and black salsify are long taproot vegetables that are very easy to grow. They don’t tolerate transplanting well, though, so sow them from seed right into the ground where they’ll get plenty of sun. Both white and black salsify taste similar to artichokes and can be peeled and cooked like parsnips or cauliflower. Wear gloves when you’re peeling them or boil them for 10 minutes before peeling to stop the messy white latex-like sap getting onto your hands.

WILD VEGETABLES

Salsola komarovii, and its Italian counterpart, Salsola soda, are also known as saltwort, monk’s beard, or agretti. Although they aren’t native to the West Coast, these greens can be grown as annuals in your garden and they thrive in coastal areas where they draw sodium from the ground as they grow. These varieties of saltwort need lots of warmth to germinate but then grow quickly and self-seed easily. They’re crunchy with a mild, salty, and slightly bitter taste. They’re most commonly eaten raw in salads and sushi or steamed and served as a side vegetable, but they can also be dried and ground into a healthy salt substitute.

Fiddleheads are the new shoots of the ostrich fern. Pick these coiled ferns when they’re small and tender if you want to eat them.

They like shade with some dappled sunlight and moist but well-drained soil, and they're a perennial, so once the crowns are established, you can harvest about one-third of the new fiddleheads each year. You must cook fiddleheads before eating them. They're delicious simply boiled or steamed and dressed with butter, salt, and pepper.

Seakale is another wild vegetable that grows easily in moist, cool Zone 4–8 climates. Pick the shoots when they're young and about 4–5 inches (20–25 cm) tall. Cook them as you'd cook asparagus. If the seakale gets older and flowers, enjoy the edible flowers in salads and as garnishes.

ORNAMENTALS

I love seeking out beautiful purple artichokes like castle, chianti, violetta, and the tiny Fiesole varieties not available in grocery stores here. Artichokes and cardoons look stunning, but they are also large plants that take up a lot of space, so they're better off in larger gardens. In warmer climates, artichokes and cardoons are perennial. If covered, they can survive in our climate as a perennial, or you can do what I do and grow them as annuals. I've had up to ten artichokes on one plant when I sowed the seeds early and raised the plants in a greenhouse before transplanting them out in May. Both veggies are delicious steamed and served with melted butter. They also work well stuffed. Baby artichokes can be trimmed and shaved thin to eat raw in salads.

Kohlrabi is a crisp, tasty vegetable related to kale that grows well on Vancouver Island. The large, edible bulb at its base is the best part if you ask me, but be sure to pick it before it gets too large and woody. I love the extra colour it brings to my garden. You can choose white, green, or, my favourite, purple.

Romanesco and fioretto are a great alternative to broccoli and cauliflower and can be used in the same way. Romanesco is a gorgeous chartreuse green with uniquely patterned florets, and fioretto is a sprouting cauliflower with long stalks. They make for stunning vegetable platters and salads.

Yard long beans, also known as asparagus beans, are super-long, stringless green beans that are harvested at 1–3 feet (30–90 cm) long. The plants start slowly as a small bush and when the heat hits, they start to grow rapidly, like pole bean plants. With their pretty flowers and impressive growth, these are lovely for areas that can use a little summertime privacy. Pick them before the seeds fatten for tender eating and to keep them producing.

OTHER OPTIONS

- Black nebula carrots
- Castelfranco radicchio
- Chayote
- Chinese pink celery
- Chioggia striped beets
- Cucamelons and lemon cucumbers
- Dragon tongue bush beans
- Edamame beans
- Egyptian walking onions
- Glass gem corn
- Ground cherries
- Horseradish
- Japanese eggplant
- King Tut peas
- Miner’s lettuce (aka claytonia)
- Peruvian purple potatoes
- Pink watermelon radishes or black Spanish radishes
- Purple sprouting broccoli

- Shishito peppers
- Shiso (used as a herb and salad green)
- Strawberry spinach (a wild species)
- Sunchokes
- Tomatillos

SUMMER IN THE KITCHEN

MENU SIX
Summer Solstice Celebration
Serves 6

Chilled Cucumber Soup with Yogurt and Mint

West Coast Salmon Bowls

Cherry Fritters

Apricot Bourbon Smash

Herbal Iced Tea

MENU SEVEN
Harvest Moon Dinner
Serves 4

Grilled Peach Salad with Prosciutto and Buffalo Burrata

One-Pan Miso-Glazed Cod and Baby Bok Choy

Minted Broad Beans

Honey-Buttered Figs with Mascarpone and Walnuts

Mint Lemon Balm Tea

MENU EIGHT

Patio Picnic
Serves 6

Torn Crispy Bread Salad with Macerated Tomatoes and Basil

Grilled Steak and Chimichurri

Hot Potato and Bush Bean Salad with Pickled Nasturtium Seeds

Grilled Apricot Pavlova

Fresh Tomato Juice

MENU NINE

Labour Day Fiesta
Serves 6

West Coast Shrimp Cocktail

Grilled Chicken Tacos with Peach Salsa

Hazelnut-Crusted Chocolate Pâte with Raspberry Coulis

Watermelon Agua Fresca

Rhubarb Margaritas

MENU TEN

Seaside Supper
Serves 4

Fresh Calamari Salad

Salmon Burgers with Dill Caper Yogurt

Peach Raspberry Swirl Ice Cream

White Summer Sangria

Menu Six Summer Solstice Celebration

SERVES 6

- Chilled Cucumber Soup with Yogurt and Mint
- West Coast Salmon Bowls
- Cherry Fritters
- Apricot Bourbon Smash
- Herbal Iced Tea

The summer solstice is a lovely reason to host dinner and enjoy company late into the evening. Chilled soup is a lovely make-ahead starter for hot summer days. In this menu it’s followed by a light, bright salmon bowl that’s easy to customize by adding more or less of each topping to your taste. The cucumber melon pickles can be made ahead and extras make a great side for sandwiches later in the week. With a crispy outside and a soft, light interior, cherry fritters get finished with a simple glaze for a sweet treat to finish the evening.

Chilled Cucumber Soup with Yogurt and Mint

Serves 6 as an appetizer

This cucumber and yogurt soup was inspired by Indian raita. Cool and refreshing, it gets dressed up with a blend of steeped spices, chopped mint, hazelnuts, and more cucumber. It makes for a great appetizer or light lunch in the summer when you don’t feel like cooking. This recipe can easily be doubled.

Soup

3 cups (750 ml) deseeded, ½-inch (1.25 cm) pieces English cucumber
¼ cup (60 ml) mint, plus extra for garnish
¼ cup (60 ml) curly parsley
1 clove garlic, minced
2 tsp (10 ml) finely grated lemon zest
3 cups (750 ml) plain, full-fat Greek yogurt
1½ tsp (7.5 ml) fine sea salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) finely ground black pepper

Garnish

1 cup (250 ml) coarsely chopped hazelnuts (see Cook's note)
½ tsp (2.5 ml) cumin seeds
3 Tbsp (45 ml) olive oil
1 tsp (5 ml) sweet paprika
¼ tsp (1 ml) red pepper flakes
½ tsp (2.5 ml) fine sea salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) granulated sugar
½ tsp (2.5 ml) minced ginger
1 cup (250 ml) deseeded and diced cucumber
Mint or parsley

Make the soup

- Place the cucumber, mint, parsley, garlic, lemon zest, yogurt, salt, and pepper in a blender or a food processor fitted with a steel blade and blend until it is as smooth as you like.

Make the garnish

- Warm a medium-sized frying pan over medium heat and add the hazelnuts and cumin seeds. Dry-fry them, shaking the pan frequently, until they are lightly toasted and fragrant, about 3 minutes. Add the oil, followed by the paprika, red pepper flakes, salt, sugar, and ginger. Cook, stirring constantly, until the ginger is soft and fragrant but not starting to brown, about 1 minute. Remove from the heat.

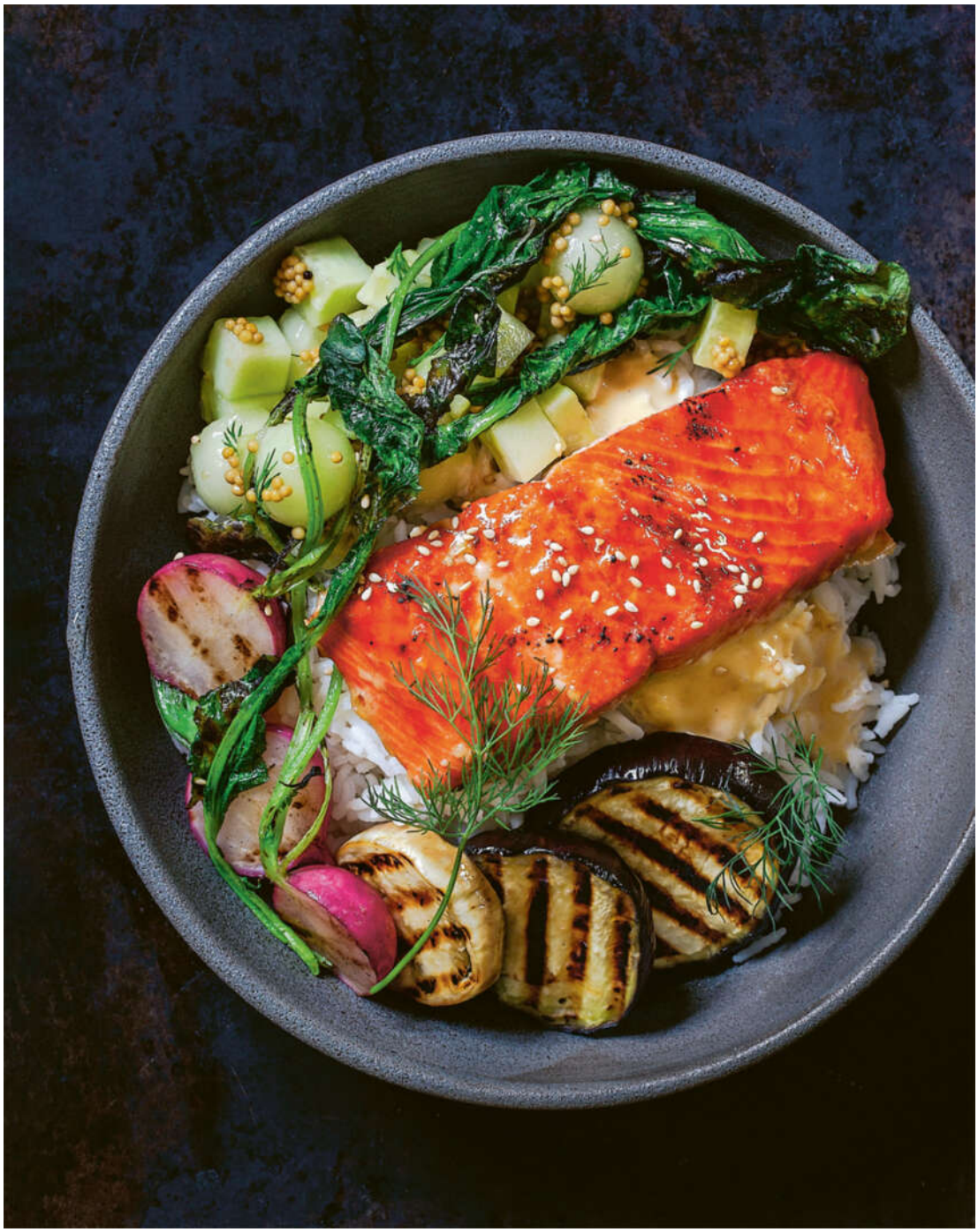
- Serve bowls of soup topped with the nutty spice mixture, a spoonful of cucumber, and a scattering of fresh herbs.

Cook’s notes

You can rub the skins off hazelnuts after you roast them, but it isn’t essential. I prefer to keep the skins because hazelnuts are among the most nutrient-dense nuts and their skins contain nutrients as well.

West Coast Salmon Bowls

Serves 6



Who doesn’t love a good meal in a bowl?! Nourishing and colourful, bowls are easy to customize for picky eaters and adventurous eaters alike. This salmon bowl is seasoned with Japanese flavours and some of its components can be made ahead, so it’s as easy to make for two as it is for twenty. Shiro miso is a light miso that makes a delicious, savoury sauce for the delicate, sweet salmon.

Rice

- 2 cups (500 ml) short-grain rice
- 1 tsp (5 ml) salt
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) vegetable oil

Salmon

- 6 × 6 oz (6 × 175 g) salmon fillets
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) salt
- 1 tsp (5 ml) shichimi togarashi seasoning (see Cook’s note)

Pickled melon and cucumber

- 1 cup (250 ml) rice wine vinegar
- ¾ cup (185 ml) water
- ¼ cup (60 ml) granulated sugar
- ½ tsp (2.5 ml) fine sea salt
- ¼ cup (60 ml) yellow mustard seeds
- 1½ cups (375 ml) ½-inch (1.25 cm) dice honeydew melon
- 1½ cups (375 ml) ½-inch (1.25 cm) dice seeded cucumber

Miso mayo sauce

- ½ cup (125 ml) Japanese Kewpie mayonnaise
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) shiro miso paste
- 2 tsp (10 ml) mirin
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice
- ½ tsp (2.5 ml) hot sauce

Grilled vegetables

- 1 Japanese eggplant
- 1 cup (250 ml) radishes with their greens
- 1 cup (250 ml) halved baby turnips or peeled and sliced large turnips
- 1 bunch scallions
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
- ¾ tsp (4 ml) salt
- ½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper

2 cups (500 ml) spinach leaves

To serve

2 Tbsp (30 ml) toasted sesame seeds
2 Tbsp (30 ml) chopped fresh dill

Make the rice

- In a 2-quart (2 L) saucepan, combine the rice with 4 cups (1 L) water, the salt, and the oil. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer until the water has been absorbed and the rice is cooked, about 20 minutes. Remove from the heat, fluff with a fork, and let sit for 5 minutes with the lid ajar.

Make the salmon

- Place the salmon in a baking dish large enough to hold all the salmon without overlapping. Whisk together the sugar, salt, and togarashi seasoning and sprinkle it over both sides of the salmon pieces. Cover and place in the refrigerator to marinate for at least 30 minutes, and up to 4 hours.

Make the pickled melon and cucumber

- Meanwhile (or up to 2 days ahead), in a medium saucepan, bring the vinegar, water, sugar, salt, and mustard seeds to a boil over high heat. Remove from the heat and let cool to room temperature. When the pickling mixture is cool, add the melon and cucumber, cover, and refrigerate until ready to use.

Make the miso mayo sauce

- In a small bowl, whisk the mayonnaise and miso together until smooth. Add the mirin, lemon juice, and hot sauce and whisk until combined. Set aside.

Cook the salmon and vegetables

- Preheat the grill to 400°F (200°C).
- Slice the eggplant into ¼-inch (0.5 cm) slices, halve the radishes lengthwise, leaving the greens attached, and put them in a medium bowl. Add the turnips and scallions, followed by the olive oil, salt, and pepper. Toss well to combine.
- Remove the salmon from the marinade and let any excess drip off. Brush the grill with an oiled brush, then place the salmon fillets on it. Grill for 2–5 minutes, depending on the thickness of your fillets, then flip and continue to grill until medium doneness, about 2–3 more minutes. Remove them to a plate and cover to keep warm. Place the eggplant, radishes, turnips, and scallions in a grilling basket on the grill. Add the spinach to the bowl and toss with any remaining marinade. Turn the vegetables once while cooking and remove them as they soften and develop grill marks, about 5 minutes in total. Place the grilled vegetables on top of the spinach, letting the spinach wilt from the heat.
- To serve, heap ¾ cup (185 ml) of hot rice into each serving bowl, drizzle 1–2 tablespoons (15–30 ml) of miso mayo over top, then top with a salmon fillet. Surround the salmon with the grilled veggies and a large scoop of drained melon and cucumber. Sprinkle toasted sesame seeds and fresh dill over and serve.

Cook’s notes

Togarashi is Japanese chili powder. There are three kinds of togarashi: nanami, shichimi, and ichimi. Ichimi is spicier and more basic than the other two. Nanami and shichimi include citrus, usually orange zest, sesame seeds, nori or other powdered seaweed, ginger, and sometimes poppy seeds. They are very similar and both add complex flavour and umami to any dish. The consensus is that

nanami contains more citrus than shichimi, but it can be harder to find. I've specified shichimi for this recipe because it's easier to find, but I recommend trying nanami if you can find it. Enjoy leftover togarashi on ramen, miso soup, or grilled fish and meat.

Cherry Fritters

Makes 18–24

Fresh local cherries are such a treat, and as fritters they are the ultimate finger food. They have a tender, airy inside and crisp outer shell with pops of fruit. Don’t be daunted by the prospect of cooking the batter. It’s really easy to make.

Fritters

1 cup (250 ml) water
½ cup (125 ml) salted butter
1 Tbsp (15 ml) granulated sugar
1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla extract
1 cup (250 ml) all-purpose flour
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground cinnamon
4 eggs
1 cup (250 ml) pitted and halved cherries
Vegetable oil, for deep-frying

Glaze

1½ cups (375 ml) icing sugar
2 Tbsp (30 ml) water
1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla extract

Make the fritters

- In a medium-sized pot, bring the water, butter, and sugar to a boil over high heat, then immediately remove from the heat. Stir in the vanilla, then stir in the flour and cinnamon. The mixture will be lumpy at first, but keep stirring until it comes together in a ball and leaves the sides of the pan.
- Add the eggs one at a time, stirring after each addition until each is fully incorporated. The batter will be thick and glossy by the time all four eggs are incorporated.
- Gently fold in the cherries, taking care not to overmix.

- Preheat 3–4 inches (7.5–10 cm) of oil in a deep fryer set to 350°F (180°C) or a pot on the stove set over medium heat. (Use a candy thermometer to check the temperature on the stovetop.)
- Place a wire cooling rack over a rimmed baking sheet.
- Once the oil is hot (test it by dropping a small drop of batter in—if it starts to bubble right away, the oil is ready), carefully drop in the batter, 1 tablespoonful (15 ml) at a time. Only add as many batter portions as can fit in one layer with a little space between each one. Do not overcrowd the pan.
- Fry the fritters until they are golden brown on one side, then flip and brown them on the other side. You'll need about 5 minutes in total per batch. If they are browning too fast or too slow, adjust your heat accordingly. Once browned, remove them with a slotted spoon to the wire rack to cool completely.

Make the glaze

- While the fritters are cooling, place the glaze ingredients in a small bowl and whisk until smooth.
- Drizzle the glaze over the cherry fritters, let the glaze set for 10 minutes, and then serve while warm or at room temperature.

Cook's notes

Be very gentle when you're stirring the cherries into the batter so the batter doesn't turn pink or red.

Apricot Bourbon Smash

Serves 6

Distilleries and craft liqueur makers have been popping up all over the West Coast, and the quality of their products has become world class. This recipe uses a bourbon-style whisky. It’s a natural pairing with apricots and it makes a fragrant and richly flavoured beverage, perfect for enjoying with lively conversation.

2 Tbsp (30 ml) granulated sugar
12 large mint sprigs, divided
1½ cups (375 ml) apricot purée (see Cook’s note)
12 oz (355 ml) bourbon-style whisky Juice of 1 lemon
Cubed ice, for mixing and serving

- Place the sugar and six mint sprigs in a large pitcher and muddle. Pour in the apricot purée, whisky, and lemon juice and stir until the sugar is fully dissolved. Fill the pitcher three-quarters of the way up with ice and stir vigorously until well chilled and condensation starts to form.
- Fill six large rocks glasses with ice and strain the cocktail equally into each glass. Garnish with a fresh sprig of mint and serve immediately.

Cook’s notes

To make apricot purée, cook 2 cups (500 ml) of halved and pitted apricots with ¼ cup (60 ml) of granulated sugar and 2 tablespoons (30 ml) of lemon juice, stirring occasionally, until the fruit is very soft, about 10 minutes. Let it cool a little, then purée to your preferred texture with an immersion blender or regular blender. Straining is optional.

Herbal Iced Tea

Makes 6 cups (1.5 L)

Keep a batch of this in your refrigerator for a refreshing summer sipper. Use this recipe as a guide and get creative with your favourite herbs, flowers, and fruit.

2 cups (500 ml) loosely packed mint or lemon balm
½ cup (125 ml) lavender leaves and flowers
½ cup (125 ml) fennel fronds
6 cups (1.5 L) water
Honey or lemon juice to taste
Fresh herbs or berries, for serving

- Place the herbs in a teapot. Bring the water to a boil, pour it over the herbs, and let it steep for 6–10 minutes. Pour the water through a tea strainer into a large pitcher, add honey (I like about ½ cup/125 ml) or lemon to taste, then refrigerate until cold.
- Serve over ice in tall glasses with fresh herbs or berries.

Cook’s notes

If you’re looking for inspiration, other herbs to try include borage, bergamot, calendula, chamomile, dandelion, echinacea, elderberry, eucalyptus, hibiscus, jasmine, lemongrass, raspberry leaf, rose petals, rosehips, rosemary, sage, and thyme. Fresh or dried berries also work very well in tea, as do spruce and fir needles, ginger root, and barley.

Menu Seven Harvest Moon Dinner

SERVES 4

Grilled Peach Salad with Prosciutto and Buffalo Burrata

One-Pan Miso-Glazed Cod and Baby Bok Choy

Minted Broad Beans

Honey-Buttered Figs with Mascarpone and Walnuts

Mint Lemon Balm Tea

We often think of fall as harvest time, but the full harvest moon occurs in the summer. Fill your basket in your garden or the farmers' market and celebrate summer's bounty.

I love contrasting flavours and textures, and this menu is full of them—soft, juicy peaches, crisped prosciutto, umami-rich sticky glazed cod, tender-crisp bok choy, and creamy minted broad beans. Even the dessert is a celebration of contrasts with its cool creamy base, crunchy toasted nuts, and syrupy figs.

Grilled Peach Salad with Prosciutto and Buffalo Burrata

Serves 4

This recipe pairs juicy and sweet peaches with crispy, salty prosciutto and peppery basil. I love how much more intense the fruit tastes after it’s grilled. Ripe summer peaches are a great fruit for grilling because they hold their shape quite well. Creamy, local

buffalo burrata ties the spicy, sweet, and salty ingredients together perfectly.

2 large ripe peaches
8 slices prosciutto
2 Tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
3 cups (750 ml) summer greens
¾ lb (375 g) ball of buffalo burrata
1 tsp (5 ml) flaky sea salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) fresh coarsely ground black pepper
2 Tbsp (30 ml) balsamic vinegar
½ cup (125 ml) basil leaves

- Preheat the grill to medium-high heat.
- Slice each peach into eight equal wedges. Slice the prosciutto in half diagonally and wrap half a slice of prosciutto around each peach wedge.
- Brush the prosciutto-wrapped peaches lightly with a little of the olive oil and place them on the preheated grill, turning once, until most of the prosciutto is crispy and you can see grill marks, about 5–8 minutes.
- To serve, scatter the greens over a platter and arrange the grilled peaches over top. Cut the burrata in half, keeping the runny side up in the mozzarella cup, then cut each side into thirds, being careful to keep the curds facing up so they are held in the mozzarella shell, and transfer them to the platter. Drizzle the remaining olive oil over the salad, then sprinkle the salt and cracked pepper over the cheese and greens. Drizzle with the vinegar, top with the basil leaves, and serve.

Cook’s notes

Buffalo burrata is a wonderful cheese with a subtle tang that tends to be creamier and richer than cow’s milk burrata because of its higher fat content. It’s worth seeking out, but if you can’t find it, use cow’s milk burrata, as it’s a treat in itself.

One-Pan Miso-Glazed Cod and Baby Bok Choy

Serves 4

Bok choy adds both crisp texture with its stem and soft texture from the greens and it soaks up sauces well, making it a great addition to one-pan recipes like this one. If you grow shiso in your herb garden, use it to garnish this dish.

¼ cup (60 ml) unsalted butter, softened

3 Tbsp (45 ml) light miso paste
2 Tbsp (30 ml) mirin or honey
1 tsp (5 ml) soy sauce
1 Tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
4 × 6 oz (4 × 175 g) pieces of boneless, skinless cod fillets
½ tsp (2.5 ml) coarse salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) finely ground black pepper
4 heads of baby bok choy
Slivered scallions or shiso leaves, for garnish (optional)

- In a small bowl, mix the butter, miso, mirin, and soy sauce together and set aside.
- Warm a 12-inch (30 cm) cast iron frying pan over medium-high heat and add the oil. Season the cod lightly with the salt and pepper. Once the oil in the pan reaches smoke point, add the fish fillets and fry until golden brown, about 4 minutes.
- Flip the fish and then spoon the miso butter into the pan around it. Nestle the bok choy between the fillets and continue to cook for 4 more minutes, turning the bok choy a quarter turn every minute but leaving the fish undisturbed.
- Remove the pan from the heat and place one bok choy on each plate. Flip the fish in the pan to coat both sides with the remaining sauce and then place it on the plates. Serve garnished with slivered scallions or shiso leaves, if using.

Gardener’s note

Bok choy is easy to grow, and baby bok choy are adorable both in the garden and on the plate. Baby bok choy take about as long as radishes and can be ready for harvest just 30–40 days after sowing!

Minted Broad Beans

Serves 4

Fresh broad beans need little coaxing to highlight their buttery and slightly nutty flavour. In this recipe, coating them with a little butter, lemon, and mint and finishing them with flaky sea salt enhances their natural flavour. Try this with favas or soybeans instead of broad beans to switch things up a bit.

2 cups (500 ml) shelled broad beans
⅓ cup (80 ml) mint chiffonade
4 tsp (20 ml) unsalted butter
1 tsp (5 ml) grated lemon zest
1 tsp (5 ml) lemon juice
½ tsp (2.5 ml) flaky sea salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper

- Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat and then add the broad beans. Let them boil for 3 minutes. Drain them in a colander and then return them to the pot off the heat. Stir in the remaining ingredients and adjust the salt and pepper to taste.

Cook’s notes

Broad beans, fava beans, and soybeans are superfoods full of vitamins, fibre, and protein. These legumes are well worth growing if you have the space. They grow easily in our climate and can be used fresh or dried for later use.

Honey-Buttered Figs with Mascarpone and Walnuts

Serves 4

I adore figs, and I devour tons of them daily during their short season. I love eating them fresh out of hand or pairing them with cheeses or meats, in grilled cheese sandwiches, over arugula with balsamic vinegar, wrapped with prosciutto and grilled . . . the list goes on. Their season is fleeting, so enjoy them while they’re here.

Allow two to three figs per person, depending on how large your figs are.

8–12 fresh figs
2–3 Tbsp (30–45 ml) salted butter 6 sprigs of thyme
⅓ cup (80 ml) honey
⅓ cup (80 ml) chopped walnuts
2 cups (500 ml) mascarpone cheese
⅓ cup (80 ml) packed brown sugar
1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla extract
Thyme leaves, for garnish (optional)

- Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).
- Stand each fig on its end and cut a deep × into them so they are almost quartered but still connected at the bottom. Place the figs on a roasting pan and spread them open a bit so they resemble a sea star. Place ½ teaspoon (2.5 ml) of butter in the centre of each fig. Nestle the sprigs of thyme on and around the figs, drizzle the honey over the figs, and roast until they are juicy and almost falling apart, about 20 minutes.
- Toast the walnuts in a dry frying pan over medium heat until fragrant but not darkened, about 3–4 minutes. Remove from the pan and set aside to cool.
- Place the mascarpone cheese in a medium bowl and whisk in the sugar and vanilla.
- Divide the mascarpone mixture equally between four bowls, top with the walnuts and warm roasted figs, and garnish with fresh thyme leaves, if using.

Mint Lemon Balm Tea

Serves 4

Mint and lemon balm combine in this recipe to create a brightly flavoured tea that can be dressed up with gin or honey for a palate-cleansing digestif.

1 cup (250 ml) loosely packed mint
1 cup (250 ml) loosely packed lemon balm
4 cups (1 L) boiling water
4 oz (125 ml) gin (optional)
Honey, for serving (optional)

- Place the herbs in a teapot, add the hot water, and place the lid on the teapot. Herbs need to steep longer than black teas, so let this sit for about 5 minutes.
- If you’re serving it with gin, pour 1 ounce (30 ml) of gin into each of four teacups, then pour in the tea. Serve with honey on the side, if using.

Menu Eight Patio Picnic

SERVES 6

- Torn Crispy Bread Salad with Macerated Tomatoes and Basil
- Grilled Steak and Chimichurri
- Hot Potato and Bush Bean Salad with Pickled Nasturtium Seeds
- Grilled Apricot Pavlova
- Fresh Tomato Juice

This is a deliciously juicy dinner with a grilled main course and grilled dessert. Medium-rare steaks are flavoured with a tart and herbaceous chimichurri, and apricots are grilled until their sweet, concentrated flavour is literally dripping out. A light but creamy hot potato salad refreshes the palate and is a showstopper if you have fresh nasturtium flowers to garnish it with. Summer-ripened tomatoes are juiced and served over ice for a delicious alcohol-free drink.

Torn Crispy Bread Salad with Macerated Tomatoes and Basil

Serves 6

This salad is like a panzanella but—if you ask me—better, because the rustic torn bread is seasoned and fried into croutons so it absorbs lots of the gorgeous garlicky tomato juices and still stays crispy. Anchovies add a touch of brine and rich umami. This is absolutely my favourite tomato salad.

2 cloves garlic, minced
2 anchovy fillets (or ½ tsp/2.5 ml salt)
½ tsp (2.5 ml) coarse sea salt
¼ cup (60 ml) extra virgin olive oil
3 cups (750 ml) torn, bite-sized pieces of rustic baguette
3 cups (750 ml) summer garden tomatoes (or ripe cherry tomatoes from the grocery store)
½ cup (125 ml) red onion, slivered
1 cup (250 ml) basil leaves, divided Ground black pepper

- In a large bowl, mash the garlic, anchovies, and salt together to make a paste, then add the oil and whisk well to combine.
- Place the baguette pieces in a medium bowl and toss with 2 tablespoons (30 ml) of the garlic-anchovy mixture.
- Warm a large frying pan over medium heat and fry the bread pieces, tossing occasionally to prevent burning, until they are crispy and starting to brown in places but still soft inside, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and let the croutons sit in the pan until you're ready to serve. Don't let them sit for any longer than 30 minutes or they won't stay soft inside.
- Chop the tomatoes into large, bite-sized pieces or in half if you're using cherry tomatoes. Add them to the remaining garlic-anchovy mixture and toss gently. Add the onions and half the basil leaves and toss again. Let the salad sit at room temperature for 30–90 minutes so the tomatoes can release their juice and the flavours meld. Just before serving, add the remaining basil and the croutons, sprinkle with freshly ground black pepper, toss once more, and serve.

Grilled Steak and Chimichurri

Serves 6

Use a T-bone or porterhouse and ask your butcher to cut it at least 1 inch (2.5 cm) thick. Using a bone-in cut helps keep the meat moist and adds lots of flavour. Salting the steak well ahead of time enhances both the texture and the flavour and helps achieve a great crispy sear.

Steaks

2 × 1½ lb (2 × 750 g) porterhouse or T-bone steaks
1½ tsp (7.5 ml) kosher salt
1 tsp (5 ml) cracked black pepper
1 Tbsp (15 ml) olive oil

Chimichurri

1 cup (250 ml) chopped curly parsley
½ cup (125 ml) slivered chives
½ cup (125 ml) chervil, fennel, cilantro, or basil
1 Tbsp (15 ml) thyme
2 Tbsp (30 ml) minced shallot
1 Tbsp (15 ml) capers
1 Tbsp (15 ml) red wine vinegar
Flaky sea salt
Ground black pepper

Cook the steaks

- Place the steaks on a large, rimmed plate or baking sheet and sprinkle the salt and pepper evenly on both sides. Place the tray in the refrigerator, uncovered, for 1–5 hours. Remove the steaks from the refrigerator 30 minutes before cooking to come to room temperature.
- Preheat the grill to high heat, about 450°F (230°C). Brush the grill with olive oil, then place the steaks over direct heat and sear them until they have a good crust, then flip them and repeat on the other side, about 3–4 minutes per side. Now move them to indirect heat, close the lid, and cook until they reach your desired internal temperature. If you have a thermometer, insert it in the centre of the steak. For medium-rare, which is my

preference, the meat should be 130°F (54°C), but aim a little lower or higher depending on your taste. Transfer the steaks to a cutting board and let them rest for 10 minutes before slicing and serving.

- To slice the steak, cut the tenderloin and strip loin from each side of the bone. Then slice each across the grain into ¼-inch (0.5 cm) slices. Drizzle any juices back over the sliced steak before plating.

Make the chimichurri and serve

- In a small bowl, mix all the ingredients together. Taste and add more salt and pepper if required. Spoon it over the sliced steak.

Hot Potato and Bush Bean Salad with Pickled Nasturtium Seeds

Serves 6

Fresh, green, and peppery, nasturtium seeds take well to pickling (see page 361) and add a bright pop of flavour anywhere you like capers or chopped pickles. I like to scatter freshly torn nasturtium flowers over the salad for a bright garnish.

2 lb (1 kg) new potatoes

1½ cups (375 ml) bush beans (see Cook’s note)
½ cup (125 ml) finely diced shallot
2 Tbsp (30 ml) slivered chives
1 tsp (5 ml) chopped thyme
2 Tbsp (30 ml) white wine vinegar
¾ cup (185 ml) sour cream
¼ cup (60 ml) mayonnaise
3 Tbsp (45 ml) grainy mustard
¾ tsp (4 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper
½ cup (125 ml) pickled nasturtium seeds (page 361)
Nasturtium leaves and flowers, for garnish (optional)

- Cut the potatoes in half or into large bite-sized pieces and place them in a pot of cold, salted water. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to medium and simmer until the potatoes are fork-tender. Drain and place in a large bowl.
- Bring another pot of salted water to a boil over high heat and blanch the beans for 1 minute. Drain and add to the bowl of potatoes.
- In a small bowl, whisk together the shallot, chives, thyme, vinegar, sour cream, mayonnaise, mustard, salt, and pepper. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary.
- Pour the dressing over the potatoes and beans, add the pickled nasturtium seeds, toss well, and garnish with nasturtium leaves and torn flowers, if using.

Cook’s notes

If you can’t find bush beans, use any good string beans cut into 1-inch (2.5 cm) pieces.

Grilled Apricot Pavlova

Serves 6

The light and fluffy meringues in this recipe can be made ahead, and the apricots are quick to grill right before serving. Bring your egg whites to room temperature before you start to prepare this for best results. And make sure your bowl and beaters are completely grease-free.

6 egg whites, at room temperature
2 tsp (10 ml) vanilla extract, divided
¾ tsp (4 ml) cream of tartar
1¾ cups (435 ml) granulated sugar, divided
1 cup (250 ml) whipping cream
3 large or 6 small apricots, cut in half, pits removed
1 Tbsp (15 ml) vegetable oil
12 small sprigs of lemon thyme
2 Tbsp (30 ml) honey, plus extra to drizzle over for garnish

- Preheat the oven to 250°F (120°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- In a large bowl, place the egg whites, 1 teaspoon (5 ml) of the vanilla, and the cream of tartar. Using a mixer on high speed, beat the egg whites until soft peaks form. Gradually add 1½ cups (375 ml) of sugar, 2 tablespoons (30 ml) at a time, beating after each addition until the sugar is dissolved and the mixture forms thick, glossy peaks. (You can use a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment if you prefer.)
- Heap the meringue into six equal mounds on the prepared baking sheet. Gently swipe the back of a spoon into the middle of each to make a 2-inch (5 cm) diameter indent that is about ½ inch (1.25 cm) deep. Place them in the oven to bake until they are firm and crispy on the outside, about 1½ hours. Remove from the oven and let cool to room temperature on the baking sheet. Once cool, carefully peel them off the parchment paper and place them on six serving plates or a serving platter.
- Meanwhile, whip the cream with the remaining vanilla and sugar.

- Preheat the grill to medium-high heat. Grease the grill and place the apricots cut side down and grill until they have light grill marks, about 1–2 minutes. Flip them over and place a thyme sprig and ½ teaspoon (2.5 ml) of honey in each half. Close the lid and let them cook until they are soft and the honey is bubbling, about 5 more minutes.
- While they cook, place a dollop of whipped cream on each meringue. Top with one or two hot grilled apricot halves, sprigs of thyme, and a little drizzle of extra honey if you like.

Fresh Tomato Juice

Serves 6

Tasty and refreshing, homemade tomato juice is much lighter-tasting than its store-bought counterpart. This version is refreshing for all ages, but if you want to spice it up, try adding 1–2 ounces (30–60 ml) of vodka per person. You don’t need to peel the tomatoes or peaches. The peels will get strained out with the seeds at the end. This recipe is best made with fresh, summer-ripened fruit.

6 cups (1.5 L) diced tomato
2 cups (500 ml) diced peaches
1 cup (250 ml) finely diced celery
1 Tbsp (15 ml) fine sea salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) finely ground black pepper
¼ cup (60 ml) honey, or to taste
Ice cubes, to serve

- Place the tomatoes, peaches, celery, salt, pepper, and honey in a blender and blend on high speed until smooth, about 1 minute.
- Strain the juice through a medium mesh sieve into a pitcher. Season to taste with additional salt, pepper, or honey. Serve in glasses over ice or cover and refrigerate for up to 1 day.

Cook’s notes

This juice purées up easily. If you like a thick drink, you can skip the straining as I like to do—but don’t skip the ice. This refreshing drink also makes for a delicious light appetizer on hot days.

Menu Nine Labour Day Fiesta

SERVES 6

- West Coast Shrimp Cocktail
- Grilled Chicken Tacos with Peach Salsa
- Hazelnut-Crusted Chocolate Pâte with Raspberry Coulis
- Watermelon Agua Fresca
- Rhubarb Margaritas

Is there anyone who doesn’t love tacos, agua fresca, and margaritas?! Swapping out some ingredients like mango, guava, and lime for locally grown peaches, watermelon, and rhubarb makes these super-fun and tasty spins on the traditional Mexican versions. The chocolate dessert has a touch of spice in keeping with the theme and it’s the perfect way to celebrate Labour Day weekend.

West Coast Shrimp Cocktail

Serves 6

This colourful shrimp cocktail is full of sweet and savoury West Coast garden ingredients and is a fun twist on ceviche. It’s a great make-ahead appetizer to put out with a big bowl of tortilla chips and margaritas on a hot day. Long ago I commercially fished small local shrimp like side stripes and pink shrimp with my dad. They’re the perfect petite shrimp for this dish.

1 lb (500 g) cooked, peeled side striped shrimp
1 small jalapeño, deseeded and finely diced
½ cup (125 ml) seeded, finely diced English cucumber
½ cup (125 ml) finely diced cherries
½ cup (125 ml) chopped cilantro
2 Tbsp (30 ml) lime juice
Coarse sea salt
Ground black pepper
Tortilla chips, for serving

- In a medium-sized bowl, gently toss all the ingredients (except the tortilla chips) to combine. Taste and add more salt and pepper if necessary. Cover and place in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour, and up to 4 hours, before tossing again and serving with tortilla chips.

Grilled Chicken Tacos with Peach Salsa

Serves 6

The tortillas and chicken in this recipe can be grilled, making it a great outdoor dinner. The peach salsa with jalapeños and red onion adds lots of bright colour and flavour and the delicious lime crema helps hold the cabbage slaw.

Chicken

2 lb (1 kg) boneless, skinless chicken breasts or thighs
2 cloves minced garlic
1 tsp (5 ml) sweet paprika
1 tsp (5 ml) ground cumin
1 tsp (5 ml) ground coriander
1 tsp (5 ml) fine salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper
2 Tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
2 Tbsp (30 ml) lime juice

Peach salsa

2½ cups (625 ml) diced fresh peaches
1–2 jalapeños, deseeded and finely diced
1 cup (250 ml) diced red onion
1 cup (250 ml) chopped cilantro
3 Tbsp (45 ml) lime juice
½ tsp (2.5 ml) flaky sea salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper

Lime crema

1 cup (250 ml) mayonnaise
1 Tbsp (15 ml) sriracha sauce
2 Tbsp (30 ml) lime juice
1 tsp (5 ml) grated lime zest

To serve

4 cups (1 L) shredded green or red cabbage
12–16 small, warmed tortillas

Cook the chicken

- Place the chicken in a baking dish large enough to hold it without crowding. In a small bowl, mix together the garlic, paprika, cumin, coriander, salt, pepper, olive oil, and lime juice.

Pour the mixture over the chicken, toss well to coat, cover, and marinate in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour and up to 24 hours.

- Remove the chicken from the refrigerator 30 minutes before you plan to cook it. Heat a grill to medium heat. Remove the chicken from the marinade, letting any excess drip off, and place it on the grill. Discard the marinade and cook the chicken until half done, about 7–10 minutes. Flip and continue to cook until done, about 7–8 more minutes. Transfer the chicken to a plate and cover to rest for 10 minutes and keep it warm until you're ready to serve. When ready to eat, slice the chicken into strips to stuff into tacos.
- While the chicken is resting, warm the tortillas on the grill, and wrap in foil to keep them warm, or simply wrap them all together and warm them in your oven.

Make the salsa

- In a small bowl, toss all the salsa ingredients together. Serve at room temperature.
- You can make the peach salsa up to 1 day ahead and store it, covered, in the refrigerator. Bring it out 1 hour before you plan to serve it.

Make the crema

- In a small bowl, mix all the crema ingredients together. Serve in a squirt bottle or a bowl with a spoon. The crema can be made up to a week ahead and kept in the refrigerator until serving.

To assemble

- Place all the taco components in the middle of the table and let everyone assemble their own.

Gardener’s note

Did you know that ground coriander is just ground dried cilantro seeds? Cilantro is one of the easiest herbs to grow, and its seeds are easy to save (see step 3 on page 183). Dry out and grind some at the end of summer for your very own homemade ground coriander and save the rest for planting the following year.

Hazelnut-Crusted Chocolate Pâte with Raspberry Coulis

Makes 1 (9-inch/23 cm) round tart

Inspired by the chilies in Mexican chocolate, this silky-smooth chocolate pâte has just a hint of spice that pairs perfectly with the garden fresh raspberry coulis.

Hazelnut crust

1 cup (250 ml) hazelnuts

2 Tbsp (30 ml) granulated sugar
¼ tsp (1 ml) fine salt
1 cup (250 ml) all-purpose flour
½ cup (125 ml) unsalted butter, melted

Chocolate filling

2 cups (500 ml) whipping cream
1 Tbsp (15 ml) vanilla extract
3 Tbsp (45 ml) granulated sugar
½ tsp (2.5 ml) red pepper flakes
¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
2 cups (500 ml) chopped semisweet chocolate (the pieces should be similar in size to chocolate chips)
⅓ cup (80 ml) unsalted butter, at room temperature, cubed

Raspberry coulis

2 cups (500 ml) raspberries (fresh or frozen and thawed are fine)
⅓ cup (80 ml) granulated sugar
1 Tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice

Make the crust

- Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Lightly grease a 9-inch (23 cm) tart pan or pie plate or line the bottom with parchment paper.
- In a food processor fitted with a steel blade, pulse the hazelnuts, sugar, and salt until finely ground. Add the flour and pulse just until it’s mixed in. Add the melted butter, pulsing again until the mixture is crumbly and combined.
- Pour the mixture into the prepared pan and press it evenly over the bottom and 1 inch (2.5 cm) up the sides of the pan.
- Bake on the middle rack until the edges are golden brown, about 20 minutes, then remove and let cool on a wire rack.

Make the filling

- Place the cream, vanilla, sugar, red pepper flakes, and salt in a medium-sized saucepan over medium-low heat. Bring just to a simmer and then turn the heat off, leaving the pot on the hot burner.
- Immediately add the chocolate to the hot cream. Stir it once and then let it sit for 5 minutes before gently stirring again until the chocolate is melted and smooth.
- Add the butter in small pieces and stir gently until well combined and the chocolate is glossy.
- Pour the chocolate mixture into the hazelnut crust right away and then refrigerate, uncovered, for at least 1 hour, or overnight. (If you're leaving it in the refrigerator overnight, cover it with foil or plastic wrap once it's cool and firmly set to prevent it from drying out.)

Make the raspberry coulis

- Place the raspberries, sugar, and lemon juice in a food processor fitted with a steel blade or a blender and purée just until blended. Don't purée too long or the seeds will start to break up and make your sauce granular.
- Strain the seeds out of the sauce with a mesh strainer. Serve right away or store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

To serve

- Serve the pâte at room temperature in wedges with a generous spoonful of raspberry coulis on the side.

Watermelon Agua Fresca

Serves 6

This agua fresca has a delightfully slushy texture and just enough tartness from the lime to make it a refreshing summer thirst quencher. Honey adds a touch of subtle sweetness, and if you add tequila, it makes a great adult drink. Chill your ingredients ahead of time.

8 cups (2 L) cold 1-inch (2.5 cm) watermelon dice
¾ cup (185 ml) lime juice
½ cup (125 ml) honey
¼ tsp (1 ml) sea salt
6 oz (185 ml) tequila (optional)
Sugar and lime wedge, for rimming the glasses
Ice and mint sprigs, to serve

- Place the watermelon, lime juice, honey, and salt in a blender and purée until it’s a slushy texture. Stir in the tequila, if using.
- Place the sugar on a small plate. Run a lime wedge around the top of a glass and dip the rim into the sugar. Repeat with each of the glasses and then fill them with ice. Pour the watermelon agua fresca over and garnish with a fresh sprig of mint.

Rhubarb Margaritas

Serves 6

The sour flavour of rhubarb is a natural replacement for the traditional lime juice in this West Coast take on the classic Mexican cocktail. Adding lime zest to the salt rim ties the flavours together and an extra small stalk of rhubarb or a twist of rhubarb makes the perfect garnish! (To make a rhubarb twist, simply use a vegetable peeler to peel strips off a stalk of rhubarb.)

Rimmer

2 Tbsp (30 ml) coarse salt
2 Tbsp (30 ml) coarse sugar
2 tsp (10 ml) lime zest
1 lime wedge

Rhubarb margarita

Ice cubes, for shaking and serving
1½ cups (375 ml) rhubarb juice (see Cook's note)
8 oz (250 ml) tequila
8 oz (250 ml) orange liqueur
RhubaGrb stalks or curls and lime wedges, for garnish (optional)

Make the rimmer

- Place the salt, sugar, and lime zest on a shallow small plate and stir to combine.
- Run the lime wedge around the rim of each glass and dip them in the salt mixture.

Make the margarita

- Place 2 cups (500 ml) of ice in a large cocktail shaker or pitcher. Pour the juice, tequila, and orange liqueur over the ice, cover, and shake or stir well.
- Place fresh ice in each glass and then strain the rhubarb margarita equally into each glass. Serve with a rhubarb stalk, rhubarb curl, or lime wedge.

Cook’s note

There are two ways to make rhubarb juice: You can use a juicer or cook the rhubarb in a pot. A juicer will give you fast, raw juice from the least amount of rhubarb. Cooking it in a pot takes more time and rhubarb but the resulting juice is sweeter (though still very sour) with a brighter pink colour and more viscous consistency. I prefer the flavour of cooked rhubarb juice, but they both bring an acidity similar to that of lime juice.

If you have a juicer, simply run 2½ cups (625 ml) fresh rhubarb stalks through it for 1½ cups (375 ml) juice (but make extra to freeze for use in the winter).

If you’re using the cooking method, place 4 cups (1 L) of ½-inch (1.25 cm) slices of rhubarb in a pot with 1 cup (250 ml) of water. Place over medium-high heat and let simmer, stirring occasionally, until the rhubarb breaks down and becomes juicy, about 10 minutes. Strain through a fine mesh sieve into a jug and let the juice cool. This will give you about 1½ cups (375 ml) of rhubarb juice. It will keep for up to a week in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Menu Ten Seaside Supper

SERVES 4

- Fresh Calamari Salad
- Salmon Burgers with Dill Caper Yogurt
- Peach Raspberry Swirl Ice Cream
- White Summer Sangria

Fresh Calamari Salad

Serves 4

Calamari (aka squid) is a great Ocean Wise Recommended sustainable seafood, and it’s quick and easy to cook. I like to cook calamari hot and fast on a grill or in a large frying pan to give them some char marks before tossing them in a bowl of veggies, dressing, and herbs. Be sure to remove them from the heat as soon as they are cooked so they don’t overcook and get tough.

½ cup (125 ml) chopped flat-leaf parsley
Finally, 1 tsp (5 ml) rich chopped vanilla oregano
the 1 clove perfect garlic, minced
1 tsp (5 ml) grated lemon zest
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) finely ground black pepper
¼ cup (60 ml) olive oil
2 Tbsp (30 ml) lemon juice
1 lb (500 g) cleaned calamari, rings and tentacles chopped into bite-sized pieces (see Cook’s note)
1 bulb fennel, tough outer leaves removed and inside thinly sliced
¾ cup (185 ml) cherry tomatoes, cut in half
¾ cup (185 ml) ½-inch (1.25 cm) dice English cucumber
½ cup (125 ml) slivered oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, drained
⅓ cup (80 ml) kalamata olives
½ cup (125 ml) crumbled feta cheese
Sweet paprika, for garnish

- In a large bowl, whisk together the parsley, oregano, garlic, lemon zest, salt, pepper, olive oil, and lemon juice. Spoon 3 tablespoons (45 ml) of this dressing into a smaller bowl and add the calamari, tossing to coat.
- Add the fennel, tomatoes, cucumber, sun-dried tomatoes, and olives to the large bowl and toss to combine.
- Preheat a large frying pan to high heat. When the pan is screaming hot, toss the calamari in and let them sear. Using a spatula, cook just until opaque, turning them once or twice, about 2–3 minutes. Add them to the large bowl of salad and toss to coat.

- Top with the feta cheese and a dusting of paprika and serve while warm.

Cook’s note

Trimming and cleaning calamari isn’t hard but it is a bit tedious. If you buy your calamari at a good fishmonger, ask them to clean it for you. If you clean them yourself, you can do it up to 1 day ahead, then cover well and keep refrigerated.

Salmon Burgers with Dill Caper Yogurt

Serves 4

Is there anything better than a grilled salmon burger on a summer night? I don’t think so. In fact, I like to grill up an extra portion or two and enjoy one cold in a sandwich the next day. Butter the buns first so the yogurt sauce doesn’t make them soggy.

Salmon burgers

1 tsp (5 ml) sweet paprika
1 tsp (5 ml) dried oregano
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper
¼ tsp (1 ml) cayenne pepper
4 × 6 oz (4 × 175 g) boneless salmon fillet portions
4 burger buns
4 tsp (20 ml) butter or margarine
2 cups (500 ml) arugula
4 Tbsp (60 ml) drained pickled onions (page 359)

Dill caper yogurt sauce

1 Tbsp (15 ml) minced shallot
1 tsp (5 ml) caper vinegar
1 cup (250 ml) Greek yogurt
1 Tbsp (15 ml) capers
2 tsp (10 ml) chopped dill
¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground black pepper

Make the salmon burgers

- In a small bowl, mix the paprika, oregano, salt, pepper, and cayenne together. Sprinkle evenly over both sides of the salmon.
- Preheat a grill or heavy frying pan to medium-high heat. Brush with vegetable oil and then add the salmon and sear. Once the salmon has seared, cook it to your desired doneness, or about 3 minutes on each side.

Make the dill caper yogurt sauce

- Place the shallot and vinegar in a small bowl and stir together. Add the yogurt, followed by the capers, dill, salt, and pepper, and stir until well combined.

Finish the burgers

- Slice the buns in half and spread a scant amount of butter on each cut side. Spread a generous amount of yogurt sauce on the bottom buns and then place a piece of salmon on each. Top each with ½ cup (125 ml) of arugula, 1 tablespoon (15 ml) of drained pickled onions, and then the top bun.

Peach Raspberry Swirl Ice Cream

Makes 7 cups (1.75 L)

This pure, custard-style vanilla ice cream with fresh peaches and raspberries takes me back to childhood summers in my mom's garden. I loved picking peas and raspberries—but Dad could keep his horseradish. Note that you'll need an ice-cream maker for this recipe.

Ice-cream base

2 cups (500 ml) whole milk (see Cook's note)
2 cups (500 ml) whipping cream
⅛ tsp (0.5 ml) fine salt
1 cup (250 ml) granulated sugar, divided
5 egg yolks
2 tsp (10 ml) vanilla extract

Fruit swirls

1 cup (250 ml) peeled and chopped peaches
2 Tbsp (30 ml) granulated sugar, divided
1 tsp (5 ml) lemon juice
1 cup (250 ml) fresh raspberries

Make the ice-cream base

- Before you start, place the bowl of your ice-cream maker in the freezer to chill.
- Place the milk, cream, salt, and ½ cup (125 ml) of sugar in a small saucepan set over medium-low heat. Scald the milk by letting it just barely come to a simmer, stirring occasionally, then reduce heat to low. Do not let it reach a boil.
- While the milk mixture is heating, in a medium bowl, beat the egg yolks with the remaining ½ cup (125 ml) of sugar until the mixture is thick and pale. Slowly whisk in one-third of the hot milk mixture to the egg yolk mixture to temper the egg yolks. Pour the warm milk and egg yolk mixture into the saucepan of hot milk, whisking constantly. Continue to whisk or stir frequently until it thickens, about 5–7 minutes, keeping the heat low so it stays below a simmer.
- Once the mixture is thick, remove from the heat, stir in the vanilla, and let cool to room temperature. Cover the bowl with

plastic wrap and refrigerate the custard until cold, at least 1 hour, and up to 1 day ahead (see Cook’s note).

Make the fruit swirls

- While the custard is cooling, place the peaches, 1 tablespoon (15 ml) of sugar, and the lemon juice in a food processor or blender and process until smooth. Place the mixture in the refrigerator and repeat with the raspberries and remaining tablespoon (15 ml) of sugar.

Freeze the ice cream

- Start your ice-cream maker and pour in the cooled base mixture. Process until thick and frozen. Swirl in the chilled peach mixture by stirring it in just once or twice, then swirl in the chilled raspberry mixture. Take care not to overmix. Serve immediately or place in a freezer-safe, airtight container until ready to serve. Sealed well, it will keep well for up to 3 months.

Cook’s notes

If you’re making the custard a day before you plan to churn it, place the plastic wrap on the top of the mixture to prevent a skin forming.

This ice cream will work with a lower-fat milk but it will be noticeably less rich.

White Summer Sangria

Serves 4 very generously

This isn’t as sweet as many sangria recipes, so it’s more refreshing in the summer. Your choice of wine will affect the sweetness of the sangria. Use an off-dry white if you want something sweeter. Enjoy this straight up or add a topper of club soda to make it extra refreshing. Feel free to change up the fruit to whatever is fresh and delicious at the moment. If elderflowers are in season, gather a bouquet of them to sit beside the pitcher.

2 cups (500 ml) ice cubes, plus more for serving
1 bottle (750 ml) chilled, unoaked floral white wine like gewürztraminer or viognier
½ cup (125 ml) local elderflower liqueur
½ cup (125 ml) orange liqueur
1 cup (250 ml) fresh raspberries
½ cup (125 ml) sliced fresh peaches, skins on
½ cup (125 ml) sliced fresh plums
Club soda, for serving (optional)

- Place 2 cups (500 ml) of ice cubes in a large pitcher or punch bowl and pour in the wine and both liqueurs. Stir well, add the fruit, and stir again.
- Serve with additional ice and club soda on the side for guests to add if they like.

Cook’s notes

If you’re tempted to make this in winter with frozen fruit, be aware that the juice will bleed into the drink and affect its appearance.

Fall

FALL IN THE GARDEN

Fall is a beautiful time of year. As the leaves change colour, tree fruits and tomatoes ripen in earnest and pumpkins try to break weight records. Salmon are spawning, and if you walk by the streams they swim in, you'll get incredible shows of nature as eagles, seagulls, and bears feast in preparation for winter.

It's too late to plant most seeds other than fast-growing radishes and greens. Low light and cooler temperatures make for slower growth, so plant more of these than you would in summer so you can harvest them in abundance from late September through November. Plant garlic and broad beans now for a summer harvest.

If you didn't plant trees in the spring, don't panic. Fall is also a good time to plant hardy fruit and nut trees. Late fall planting helps keep the roots moist and gives the trees a chance to settle in and acclimate to their new spot before their vigorous growth period in spring. Put mulch or row covers around delicate trees and garden beds.

Now is the time to dry, jam, can, pickle, and freeze all your excess produce to enjoy throughout the winter. Use the preserve section (pages 331–367) to help you with this.

Fall is an exciting time for foraging if you love mushrooms. I've listed only a few of the many types of mushrooms that are in season now. Be sure to identify any mushrooms with 100% certainty before eating them.

Finally, don't forget to enjoy the abundance. Go apple-picking at a local farm and finish the day with local apple cider. Decorate your table with gourds or dried flowers from your garden and host a harvest dinner to celebrate with family and friends and enjoy the literal fruits of your labour.

Harvest Now

- Apples and crab apples
- Artichokes

- Arugula
- Beans (all)
- Beets
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Chestnuts
- Chicory
- Collards
- Corn
- Cranberries
- Cucumbers (all kinds)
- Eggplant
- Endive
- Fennel
- Figs
- Garlic
- Grapes
- Hazelnuts
- Herbs (all)
- Kiwi
- Leeks

- Melons
- Onions
- Peaches and nectarines
- Pears
- Peas
- Plums
- Pumpkins
- Quince
- Radishes
- Rutabagas
- Squash (winter and summer varieties)
- Tomatoes
- Turnips
- Walnuts
- Yams and sweet potatoes

Forage Now

- Blackberries
- Bolete mushrooms
- Cauliflower mushrooms
- Chanterelles
- Chicken of the woods
- Chickweed
- Crab apples

- Cranberries
- Dandelion greens and root
- Elderberries
- Hawthorn berries
- Hedgehog mushrooms
- Juniper berries
- Lion’s mane
- Lobster mushrooms
- Matsutake (aka pine mushrooms)
- Oregon grapes
- Oyster mushrooms
- Plantain
- Rosehips
- Saffron milkcaps
- Shaggy manes
- Yarrow

Direct-Sow Now

- Broad beans
- Garlic
- Mustard greens
- Radishes

2024
Lobster
Mushrooms
2024
FOLD & FILL

Seed-Saving

Saving seeds from your garden is easy, saves money, and helps you grow stronger, more resilient plants that adapt to your own climate and soil. It also allows you to preserve heirloom varieties and promotes sustainability and self-sufficiency.

Some plants—for example, cucumber and squash—cross-pollinate easily, so grow only one variety or hand-pollinate them if you want true-to-type seeds. Biennials like carrots and beets need to be left in the ground and will go to seed in their second year. Let the seeds dry on the plant and then shake them into bags as you would with herb seeds. You need to leave only a few carrots and beets to go to seed because each carrot or beet will produce plenty of seeds.

Here's a step-by-step guide to seed-saving.

1. Choose the right plants. Select open-pollinated or heirloom varieties, as hybrid seeds may not produce true-to-type plants. Pick the healthiest, most productive plants with the best flavour and growth patterns.

2. Allow the seeds to fully mature. Let fruits and vegetables that contain seeds—for example, tomatoes, peppers, and melons—ripen fully before harvesting. Allow leafy greens, herbs, and flowers to bolt and produce seed heads.

3. Harvest the seeds. For wet seeds, like those of tomatoes, cucumbers, and peppers, scoop out the seeds and rinse them. For dry seeds, like those of beans, peas, lettuce, and herbs, wait for the seed pods or heads to dry on the plant before collecting them. For herbs and greens, let their flowers go to seed, then collect the dried seed heads by shaking them into a paper bag. Peas and beans can be easily shelled by hand once dry.

4. Clean and dry the seeds. Remove any pulp, chaff, or debris and spread the seeds in a single layer on a paper towel or screen in a cool, dry place for about a week.

5. Store the seeds properly. Ensure the seeds are completely dry before you store them in envelopes, glass jars, or airtight containers in a cool, dark, dry place. With a few exceptions, most seeds will remain viable for up to 3 years and some even longer if stored in ideal conditions. Remember to label the containers.

6. Test their viability before planting. If your seeds are old or you're not sure if they were stored correctly, test some before planting. Place a few seeds on a damp paper towel in a plastic bag or cover the paper towel with plastic wrap to keep it moist. If most sprout within a few days, the seeds are still good to use.

FALL IN THE KITCHEN

MENU ELEVEN
Fall Equinox Feast
Serves 6

Oceanna's Patty Cakes

Old Bay Corn on the Cob

Crispy-Skinned Grilled Salmon with Tapenade

Peach Cake

Rosehip Iced Tea

MENU TWELVE
Giving Thanks
Serves 6

Chanterelle Mushroom Crostini

Ukrainian Family Borscht

Rosemary Garlic Roast Chicken and Grapes

Forest Mushroom Risotto

Honey, Cheese, and Nuts

Lemon Lavender Airmail

MENU THIRTEEN

A Small Celebration

Serves 4

Pear and Prosciutto Tarts with Arugula and Goat Cheese

Roasted Butternut Squash with Crispy Pepitas

Pan-Fried Brown Butter and Walnut Lingcod

Plum Clafoutis

Cranberry French 75

MENU FOURTEEN

Hunter’s Moon Dinner

Serves 4

Leek and Corn Chowder

Fennel, Apple, and Cabbage Slaw with Citrus Dressing

Venison Leg Roast with Blackberry Sauce

Roast Acorn Squash

Oat Baked Apples

Blackberry Sage Tonic

MENU FIFTEEN

The Heart of the Home

Serves 6

Rosemary, Grape, and Olive Focaccia

Fall Apple and Blue Cheese Salad

White Bean Stew with Kale and Fennel

No-Bake Spiced Pumpkin Cheesecakes

Peach Gin and Sonic

Menu Eleven Fall Equinox Feast

SERVES 6

- Oceanna’s Patty Cakes
- Old Bay Corn on the Cob
- Crispy-Skinned Grilled Salmon with Tapenade
- Peach Cake
- Rosehip Iced Tea

Corn on the cob and savoury patty pan squash pancakes are regular menu items in my house during early fall. My daughter, Oceanna, will eat the patty cakes on their own or with a herb and yogurt dip for any meal, which is how they ended up being called Oceanna’s patty cakes. For the rest of us, I like to pair them up with crispy grilled salmon and hand-chopped tapenade and sweet, savoury corn on the cob. To finish, a simple and moist peach cake pairs up with tart rosehip iced tea sweetened with a little honey.

Oceanna’s Patty Cakes

Serves 6

I love summer squash. I find it so versatile. You can swap it for cucumber in salads; it’s sturdy enough to be grilled or pan-fried or made into pickles and relish; and it’s perfect for grating into sweet or savoury fritters and muffins. It’s also fun and fast to grow and provides plenty of squash blossoms for stuffing or scattering in salads. Any medium-sized summer squash will work in these savoury pancakes.

Herb yogurt dip

1 cup (250 ml) plain yogurt
¼ cup (60 ml) chopped mint
¼ cup (60 ml) chopped parsley
1 tsp (5 ml) chopped dill or chives
½ tsp (2.5 ml) sea salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper

Patty cakes

4 eggs
4 cups (1 L) grated patty pans or other summer squash
¾ cup (185 ml) crumbled feta cheese
2 Tbsp (30 ml) chopped dill or mint
1½ cups (375 ml) all-purpose flour
2 tsp (10 ml) baking powder
½ tsp (2.5 ml) fine salt
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground black pepper
⅛ tsp (0.5 ml) cayenne pepper
½ cup (125 ml) vegetable oil, for frying

Make the herb yogurt dip

- In a bowl, stir all the ingredients together and chill until serving.

Make the patty cakes

- Preheat the oven to its lowest setting, usually about 170°F (77°C). Line an ovenproof plate with paper towel and place it in the oven to warm.

- In a large bowl, whisk the eggs. Gently squeeze some of the extra liquid out of the grated squash and add the squash to the eggs. Stir in the feta and dill to combine.
- In a separate bowl, mix together the flour, baking powder, salt, pepper, and cayenne. Add these dry ingredients to the squash mixture. Stir gently just until combined.
- Heat the oil in a large frying pan on medium heat to 350°F (180°C). Once it's reached temperature (see page 305), drop the batter in by heaping tablespoonfuls (20–25 ml), being careful not to crowd the pan. (You'll need to cook these in batches.) Cook until golden brown, about 3–4 minutes. Flip and continue to cook until the second side is golden brown and they are cooked through, about 3–4 more minutes. If they seem to be browning too quickly, turn the heat down to medium-low. Use a slotted spoon to transfer them to the prepared plate and put them in the oven while you cook the remainder of the patty cakes. (The oil will retain its temperature between batches.) Serve with herb yogurt dip.

Old Bay Corn on the Cob

Serves 6

So simple, so savoury, and so sweet. Old Bay spiced corn is a great side dish for barbecues and grilled seafood.

6 cobs of corn, shucked
⅓ cup (80 ml) salted butter, softened, cubed
1 tsp (5 ml) Old Bay spice
½ tsp (2.5 ml) flaky sea salt
⅓ cup (80 ml) finely chopped flat-leaf parsley

- Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat, add the corn, return the water to a boil, and then set the timer for 5 minutes.
- Using a slotted spoon, lift the cooked corn onto a platter.
- Meanwhile, in a small bowl, whip the butter, Old Bay, salt, and parsley together with a fork and then scoop it into a serving bowl.
- Serve the hot corn with butter and lots of napkins on the side.

Cook’s notes

No corn on the cob? Stir this butter into 4 cups (1 L) of hot cooked corn kernels.

Crispy-Skinned Grilled Salmon with Tapenade

Serves 6

Fresh salmon with the skin on is a real treat when it’s grilled or pan-fried until crisp. When we were commercial salmon fishing, my dad and I would cut a small salmon into steaks and cook it simply with just some sea salt, right on the grill of the boat’s oil stove. If you can get fresh whole fish or fillets, run a knife against the grain of the

scales to remove them, then rinse and dry the fish before pan-frying for the best crispy-skinned salmon.

Grated zest of 1 lemon, divided
4 Tbsp (60 ml) olive oil, divided
1 clove garlic, minced
2 Tbsp (30 ml) chopped fennel fronds, divided
1 Tbsp (15 ml) chopped dill
6 × 6 oz (6 × 175 g) salmon fillets
1 tsp (5 ml) flaky sea salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper
2 Tbsp (30 ml) coarsely chopped, pitted, mixed olives
2 Tbsp (30 ml) finely chopped hazelnuts
1 Tbsp (15 ml) capers
¼ cup (60 ml) chiffonade basil or tarragon
1 tsp (5 ml) grated orange zest
2 chive blossoms, torn into small florets (optional)

- Preheat the grill to medium-high heat.
- In a small bowl, mix together 1 teaspoon (5 ml) lemon zest, 2 tablespoons (30 ml) olive oil, the garlic, 1 tablespoon (15 ml) fennel, and the dill. Rub the mixture evenly over the salmon pieces and then season both sides of each piece with salt and pepper.
- Brush the grill with oil, place the salmon on it skin side down, and close the lid. Let the salmon cook for about 6 minutes before checking for doneness. Ideally, cook it until the skin is crispy and the flesh is cooked medium. This will take 6–10 minutes, depending on the thickness of your salmon.
- Meanwhile, place the remaining lemon zest, olive oil, fennel fronds, olives, hazelnuts, capers, basil, orange zest, and torn chive blossoms, if using, in a small bowl, stir, and season to taste with pepper.
- When the salmon is cooked, place a piece on each plate, skin side up so it stays crispy. Serve with a heaping spoonful of the

olive tapenade on the side.

Peach Cake

Makes 1 (9-inch/23 cm) square cake

Tender, rich, and full of peaches, this cake will disappear fast! Luckily, it’s very quick and easy to make and because it’s so moist and juicy, it needs only a light dusting of icing sugar to finish it off.

1 cup (8 oz) cream cheese, at room temperature, cubed
½ cup (125 ml) unsalted butter, at room temperature
1½ cups (375 ml) granulated sugar 2 eggs
2 tsp (10 ml) vanilla extract
2¼ cups (560 ml) all-purpose flour
1 Tbsp (15 ml) baking powder
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
1 cup (250 ml) buttermilk (see Cook’s note)
2 cups (500 ml) peeled, diced, fresh or frozen and thawed peaches
2 Tbsp (30 ml) icing sugar

- Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Grease the bottom and sides of a 9-inch (23 cm) square cake pan.
- In a large mixing bowl, cream together the cream cheese, butter, sugar, eggs, and vanilla until smooth.
- In a separate small bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, and salt. Add this to the cream cheese mixture and mix until well combined.
- Gradually stir in the buttermilk until the batter is smooth, then gently stir in the peaches.
- Pour the batter into the prepared cake pan and bake until a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean, about 35–40 minutes.
- Let the cake cool in the pan for 10 minutes, then transfer it to a wire rack to cool completely.
- Dust with the icing sugar before serving.

Cook’s notes

Buttermilk is an important ingredient in this and many other baking recipes. The acidity adds a tangy flavour and helps with leavening and tenderizing the gluten. If you find yourself without buttermilk, in a pinch you can use one of the following substitutes:

Stir 2 tablespoons (30 ml) lemon juice (my preference) or light-coloured vinegar into 1 cup (250 ml) of milk (skim to whole or in between is fine). Wait 5 minutes, stir again, and then use in place of buttermilk.

Use an equal volume of plain yogurt or sour cream, thinned with a touch of water or milk if needed.

Rosehip Iced Tea

Serves 6

Brightly coloured and tart, rosehips are full of vitamin C. In this recipe I steep and chill them, then temper their tartness with honey for a refreshing fall drink.

⅔ cup (160 ml) fresh rosehips
6 cups (1.5 L) water
6 Tbsp (90 ml) honey, or to taste
Ice, for serving

- Coarsely chop the rosehips in a blender or a food processor fitted with a steel blade until they are roughly the size of peas.
- Bring the water and honey to a boil in a medium saucepan over high heat, turn off the heat, and add the chopped rosehips. Let the mixture steep in the pot on the burner until cooled, then strain well through a fine mesh sieve into a jug and refrigerate until you’re ready to serve.
- To serve, add ice to six glasses and pour in the tea. Offer spoons and honey for guests to sweeten it more if they prefer.

Menu Twelve Giving Thanks

SERVES 6

- Chanterelle Mushroom Crostini
- Ukrainian Family Borscht
- Rosemary Garlic Roast Chicken and Grapes
- Forest Mushroom Risotto
- Honey, Cheese, and Nuts
- Lemon Lavender Airmail

I love the earthy flavours of forest mushrooms and beets grown in rich soil. Mushroom toasts are a regular appetizer in the fall in our household and borscht is the perfect cold-weather soup to come home to after a day of foraging. I love using grapes to add natural sweetness and acidity to roast chicken and pork dishes. In this recipe, the grapes go right in the pan with the chicken. They roast in the rosemary garlic pan sauce for an easy and fragrant main course. Sometimes I roast extra grapes in a separate pan to serve with the cheese and nuts in place of the honey. Give it a try if you have lots of grapes. This may not be a classic Thanksgiving dinner for Grandma, but it’s a perfect special meal for Friendsgiving.

Chanterelle Mushroom Crostini

Makes 18

After a day of treasure hunting (foraging) in the forest, this is an easy but luxurious dish to make. I use chanterelles in this recipe, but other wild mushrooms like lobster, cauliflower, or boletes are equally delicious.

3 Tbsp (45 ml) olive oil, divided
3 cups (750 ml) chanterelle mushrooms, sliced or torn into large pieces
1 clove garlic, minced
1 Tbsp (15 ml) dry, unoaked white wine (or 1 tsp/5 ml lemon juice)
½ cup (125 ml) whipping cream
¼ tsp (1 ml) hot sauce
½ cup (125 ml) chopped curly or flat-leaf parsley
1 tsp (5 ml) chopped thyme
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground black pepper
18 × ½-inch (1.25 cm) slices of ciabatta or other hearty baguette-style bread
¾ cup (185 ml) grated local white cheddar, sliced brie, or other meltable cheese

- In a large frying pan, warm 1 tablespoon (15 ml) olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the mushrooms and fry them, stirring occasionally, until they release their liquid and start to brown on the edges. Wild mushrooms vary greatly in the amount of water they hold, so this will go faster if you've had dry weather and slower if it's been wet.
- Reduce the heat to medium, stir in the garlic, and sauté until soft and fragrant, about 1–2 more minutes, being careful not to let it brown.
- Stir in the wine, cream, hot sauce, parsley, thyme, salt, and pepper. Reduce the heat to medium-low and let the mixture simmer, stirring occasionally, until it has thickened and reduced by about one-third. Taste and add more salt and pepper if needed.
- Preheat the broiler of your oven.
- Brush one side of each ciabatta slice with the remaining olive oil and place them on a baking sheet. Place the bread under the

broiler and toast just until the bread starts to brown, 1–2 minutes, then remove from the heat.

- Top each toast with an equal amount of creamy mushroom mixture and sprinkle or lay the cheese over top. Place the toasts back under the broiler until the tops are bubbly and beginning to brown, 2–3 minutes.
- Remove from the heat and let sit for 3–5 minutes before serving to prevent burnt mouths.

Cook’s notes

The mushroom topping makes a tasty pasta sauce. Just add 1 cup (250 ml) of chicken or vegetable stock along with the cream, omit the bread and cheese, and serve with your preferred pasta shape and some grated parmesan sprinkled on top.

Ukrainian Family Borscht

Serves 6 generously

There are many variations on borscht, but this is my family's version and the way I like it best. It draws on my Ukrainian great-grandparents' recipe, which is heavy on the beets. Browning the meat well makes a difference to the amount of flavour in the finished soup, so if you opt to make it vegetarian, use a flavourful broth in place of the water. Begin this early in the day so the meat has lots of time to simmer and become tender. Leftovers not only keep well in the refrigerator but taste even better the next day.

1 lb (500 g) stewing beef
1 tsp (5 ml) fine salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper
1 Tbsp (15 ml) vegetable oil
2 cups (500 ml) chopped yellow onion
1 cup (250 ml) chopped celery
1 cup (250 ml) chopped carrot
6 cups (1.5 L) water
4 cups (1 L) chopped beets
2 cups (500 ml) chopped red cabbage
1 Tbsp (15 ml) red wine vinegar
1–2 cups (250–500 ml) beet tops (optional)
Sour cream and dill, for serving (optional)

- Season the beef well with salt and pepper.
- Warm the oil in a large, heavy-bottomed soup pot over medium-high heat. Once it's hot enough to make a drop of water sizzle, sear the beef well on all sides until deep brown, about 10–15 minutes total.
- Add the onions, celery, and carrots and cook until the vegetables are softened, about 5 minutes, stirring up the dark brown bits from the bottom of the pot. Pour in the water, stir, and increase the heat to high. Bring it to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until the beef is tender, about 3–4 hours. Add more water if necessary to keep the meat and vegetables covered.

- Stir in the beets and red cabbage, cover the pot with a lid, and simmer for 1 more hour. Stir once at the 30-minute point and replace the lid.
- Add the red wine vinegar and beet tops, if using, stir, and season to taste with salt and pepper.
- Serve hot, garnished with sour cream and dill, if using.

Rosemary Garlic Roast Chicken and Grapes

Serves 6

Spatchcocking the chicken before cooking it in this recipe helps the meat cook evenly and the skin crisp up for maximum deliciousness. Homegrown table grapes roast down into the garlic rosemary pan drippings to create a juicy sweet and savoury condiment. I love to

roast the grapes on the vine for a dramatic presentation, but you can pick them off if you prefer.

2 Tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
4 cloves garlic, minced
2 Tbsp (30 ml) chopped rosemary
2 tsp (10 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper
½ tsp (2.5 ml) red pepper flakes
1 shallot
1 3 lb (1.5 kg) whole chicken
1 lb (500 g) red seedless grapes

- Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C).
- In a small bowl, whisk together the oil, garlic, rosemary, salt, pepper, and red pepper flakes. Peel and thinly slice the shallot and spread it out in a roasting pan large enough to hold the spatchcocked chicken without crowding.
- Using kitchen scissors or a sharp boning knife, remove the backbone of the chicken, flip it over so the cut side is facing down, then push down hard on the chicken to flatten it. Rub the herb oil all over the chicken, then place it in the roasting pan on top of the shallots, tucking the wings under. Place it in the oven to roast for 40 minutes.
- Take the roasting pan out of the oven and nestle the grapes all around the chicken. Spoon any pan juices over the grapes. Return to the oven until the chicken is crisp, golden, and cooked through to 170°F (77°C), about 20 minutes.
- Remove the chicken from the oven and let it rest in the pan for 10 minutes before carving it into six pieces. Serve with the grapes and pan drippings over top.

Forest Mushroom Risotto

Serves 6

Arborio and carnaroli are traditional choices for risotto, but you can use any type of short-grain rice. I use chanterelles in this recipe but use whatever wild mushrooms you have on hand. A mix of kinds is especially nice in this side dish.

1 Tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
¼ cup (60 ml) diced shallot
1 clove garlic, minced
4 cups (1 L) sliced chanterelle mushrooms
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper
½ cup (125 ml) unoaked, dry white wine
1½ cups (375 ml) arborio rice
1 large sprig of thyme
1 bay leaf
4 cups (1 L) hot vegetable, chicken, or mushroom stock
½ cup (125 ml) grated parmesan
½ cup (125 ml) chopped flat-leaf parsley
Thyme or curly parsley, for garnish (optional)

- In a high-sided 12-inch (30 cm) frying pan, warm the oil over medium heat. Add the shallots and garlic. Cook until translucent, about 2 minutes, and then add the mushrooms, salt, and pepper.
- Sauté the mushrooms, stirring occasionally, until any liquid released is evaporated and absorbed and the mushrooms start to go golden brown along the edges. Add the wine and cook, stirring occasionally, until the wine has reduced by half, about 5 minutes.
- Remove one-quarter of the cooked mushrooms, cover to keep warm, and set aside to use as a garnish.
- Reduce the heat to medium-low. Add the rice and stir until the remaining liquid is all absorbed.
- Next, stir in the thyme and bay leaf. Add about ½ cup (125 ml) of hot stock, stirring frequently but not constantly, until the liquid

is absorbed. Repeat with the remaining stock, adding it ½ cup (125 ml) at a time, until the rice is al dente, about 20–25 minutes.

- You may not need the full 4 cups (1 L) of stock, so test the rice once you've added 3 cups (750 ml) of it. If the rice is cooked, don't add any more stock. If you find you need to add more than 4 cups (1 L) of liquid, use a little hot water to finish things off.
- Turn the heat to the lowest setting and stir in the parmesan and parsley. Season to taste with salt and pepper and remove from the heat.
- To serve, spoon the risotto into bowls, top with the reserved mushrooms, and garnish with more thyme or parsley if desired.

Cook's notes

Risotto should be a fairly loose consistency. If it gets too thick before you serve it, simply add a little more hot veggie stock or water 2 tablespoons (30 ml) at a time, and stir it through.

This makes a great vegetarian main course for four people. It's also a perfect side dish for roast salmon, braised lamb, or beef stew.

Honey, Cheese, and Nuts

Serves 6

Dessert doesn’t need to be complicated. This is such a simple one that it doesn’t really need a recipe, but it’s a beautiful and satisfying way to finish dinner. Your favourite honey is perfect but if you can find honey with its comb, the presentation quotient goes way up. I’ve added some optional ingredients but don’t get carried away. The cheese, honey, and nuts are the stars.

½ cup (125 ml) honey (plus its honeycomb if available)
½ lb (250 g) of your favourite local tangy or aged cheese (goat, brie, cheddar, or blue all work well)
1 cup (250 ml) fresh, shelled local nuts
Crackers or bread, fresh or dried fruits (optional)

- Serve the honey in a rimmed dish with a small spoon. Arrange the cheese on a serving board with a cheese knife, add the nuts in a little pile, and then place the plate or bowl of honey on the board.
- Put out dessert plates and plenty of napkins. Port or ice wine would be a lovely drink with this.

Cook’s notes

Honeycomb is most often available in the fall after the bees have been working all summer. If you can find it, a piece about 3 inches (7.5 cm) square or the equivalent is enough for six people. Tip the honeycomb up a little so the honey runs out into the bowl. Save the honeycomb and slice or dice it and use it to decorate cakes or sweeten tea or cocktails, or chop it finely and whip it into butter for a tasty spread.

Lemon Lavender Airmail

Serves 6

Lavender honey syrup is a special ingredient that can level up desserts and drinks instantly. You only need ⅓ cup (80 ml) for this recipe, but extras keep well for up to 2 months if stored in the refrigerator. Place your glasses in the refrigerator ahead of time to chill.

6 oz (185 ml) white rum
⅓ cup (80 ml) lavender honey syrup (see Cook's note)
⅓ cup (80 ml) lemon juice
Ice cubes
6 oz (185 ml) chilled dry sparkling wine
Lavender blossoms or lemon twists, for garnish (optional)

- Fill a cocktail shaker with ice. Add the rum, syrup, and lemon juice and shake well. Strain equally into six champagne coupes. Top each with an ounce (30 ml) of sparkling wine and garnish with a small sprig of lavender or a lemon twist.

Cook's notes

To make lavender honey syrup, combine ½ cup (125 ml) honey with ¼ cup (60 ml) water and 1 tablespoon (15 ml) lavender sprigs or flowers in a small saucepan. Place the pot over high heat, stir, and bring to a boil for 3 minutes. Remove from the heat and let cool. Strain through a fine mesh sieve into an airtight container and store in the refrigerator for up to 2 months.

Menu Thirteen

A Small Celebration

SERVES 4

- Pear and Prosciutto Tarts with Arugula and Goat Cheese
- Roasted Butternut Squash with Crispy Pepitas
- Pan-Fried Brown Butter and Walnut Lingcod
- Plum Clafoutis
- Cranberry French 75

This is an elegant meal with lots of West Coast fruits and a few French inspirations. Enjoy a cranberry Champagne cocktail alongside the savoury pear and goat cheese tart, which can be made ahead of time. The entrée is rich with brown butter toasted walnuts over the lingcod. Squash topped with crispy pepitas makes a pretty side dish with contrasting sweet and salty flavours, and dessert is a luscious plum clafoutis. Almost everything except the lingcod can be made ahead, leaving you time to enjoy your guests.

Pear and Prosciutto Tarts with Arugula and Goat Cheese

Makes 4

This sweet and savoury starter also makes a delicious light lunch or dinner when served with soup or a salad. You can use crumbled blue cheese instead of the goat cheese, if you prefer.

½ lb (250 g) sheet of puff pastry, thawed
6 Tbsp (90 ml) crumbled goat cheese 1 tsp (5 ml) thyme

¼ tsp (1 ml) red pepper flakes
1 Bartlett or Bosc pear, cored, and sliced crosswise into 12
4 thin slices of prosciutto, halved
3 Tbsp (45 ml) honey
1 egg
1 tsp (5 ml) water
1 cup (250 ml) arugula
1 Tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
2 tsp (10 ml) apple cider vinegar
¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground black pepper

- Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- Roll the puff pastry into a 9-inch (23 cm) square and cut it into quarters. Transfer to the prepared baking sheet and, using a knife, gently score a shallow line ½ inch (1.25 cm) away from the edge of each piece, all the way around.
- Avoiding the outer edges of the square, top each piece with 1½ tablespoons (22 ml) of the goat cheese and an equal sprinkle of thyme and red pepper flakes. Top each with three pieces of the thinly sliced pear, and then arrange the torn prosciutto in small, twisted piles. Drizzle 2 teaspoons (10 ml) of honey over top of each tart.
- In a small bowl, whisk together the egg and water and then brush the edges of each square with the egg wash.
- Bake until golden brown, about 25 minutes.
- Just before serving, toss the arugula with the oil, vinegar, salt, and pepper.
- Serve the tarts warm or at room temperature topped with a small heap of the dressed arugula.

Cook’s notes

Keep the puff pastry and goat cheese chilled until you’re ready to use them and bake immediately after topping the tart to prevent the crust from getting soggy.

Roasted Butternut Squash with Crispy Pepitas

Serves 4

The salty, crispy pepitas that top the squash add extra protein, fibre, and crunch to this warm fall side dish. They can be made up to 3 days ahead and stored in an airtight container until you’re ready to use them.

4 sage leaves, finely sliced

1 tsp (5 ml) salt, divided
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground nutmeg
¼ tsp (1 ml) cayenne pepper
3 Tbsp (45 ml) olive oil, divided
1 Tbsp (15 ml) honey
1 small (1 lb/500 g) butternut squash, sliced in half lengthwise, cleaned, and seeds rinsed, drained, and reserved
½ tsp (2.5 ml) sweet paprika

- Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- In a small bowl, combine the sage, ½ teaspoon (1 ml) of salt, the pepper, nutmeg, cayenne, 2 tablespoons (30 ml) of olive oil, and honey. Slice each squash half lengthwise and then place them on the prepared baking sheet, cut side up. Drizzle the honey mixture evenly over the squash quarters.
- Cover with foil and bake for 20 minutes. Uncover and roast until the squash is soft and starting to brown around the edges, 10–15 minutes.
- While the squash is roasting, toss the squash seeds with the remaining olive oil, salt, and the paprika. Pan-fry the seeds in a large non-stick pan over medium heat, tossing frequently until they are dry and crispy on the outside, about 10 minutes.
- Serve the squash hot, topped with the crispy pepitas.

Pan-Fried Brown Butter and Walnut Lingcod

Serves 4

Lingcod is probably my favourite white fish because it has a mild flavour but enough fat that it doesn’t dry out as easily as halibut during cooking. This fish gets some deep fall flavours and a little crunch thanks to the sage and toasted nuts. If you have hazelnuts, they make a tasty alternative to walnuts.

6 Tbsp (90 ml) salted butter
4 Tbsp (60 ml) coarsely chopped walnuts
¼ cup (60 ml) minced shallot
1 tsp (5 ml) chopped thyme
1 tsp (5 ml) chopped sage leaves
2 Tbsp (30 ml) honey
1 Tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
4 × 6 oz (6 × 175 g) boneless, skinless lingcod fillets
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
¾ tsp (4 ml) ground black pepper

- In a small saucepan, cook the butter and walnuts over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until the milk solids in the butter are golden brown. Stir in the shallots, thyme, and sage and cook for 1 more minute. Whisk in the honey and season to taste with salt and pepper. Turn the burner to its lowest setting to keep the mixture warm while you cook the fish.
- In a large, cast iron or non-stick frying pan, warm the oil over medium-high heat. Season the lingcod with salt and pepper and then place it in the pan. Cook until golden brown on the underside, about 3–4 minutes, flip, and cook just until it’s white throughout, about 2–3 more minutes.
- Place each portion of lingcod on a plate and spoon walnut sauce over top before serving.

Plum Clafoutis

Serves 4 generously

Plums get jammy and sweet when they’re baked in this easy batter that turns out somewhere between a cake and vanilla custard. This recipe is delicious with peaches, cherries, apricots, or rhubarb too. Store leftover clafoutis, covered, in the refrigerator.

4 eggs
¾ cup (185 ml) whole milk
1 Tbsp (15 ml) vanilla extract
½ cup (125 ml) granulated sugar
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground nutmeg
¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
½ cup (125 ml) all-purpose flour
2 cups (500 ml) pitted plums, sliced into ½-inch (1.25 cm) thick slices

- Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Lightly grease a 9-inch (23 cm) or 10-inch (25 cm) heavy pie plate or cast iron frying pan.
- Using a blender, blend the eggs, milk, vanilla, sugar, nutmeg, and salt until the mixture is frothy, about 30–60 seconds.
- Add the flour and blend again until smooth, about 60 seconds. Pour the batter into the greased pie plate and arrange the plums in a single layer over the top in concentric circles. Try to avoid overlapping them.
- Bake until lightly browned on the edges and slightly jiggly in the middle, about 35–45 minutes.
- Let cool almost to room temperature before serving.

Cranberry French 75

Serves 4

I love a good glass of bubbly, and the lightly spiced cranberry simple syrup makes this cocktail extra pretty. This is a great drink for Thanksgiving (and Christmas, too).

Cranberry simple syrup

2 cups (500 ml) fresh cranberries
1 cup (250 ml) granulated sugar
2-inch (5 cm) strip of orange zest
½-inch (1.25 cm) slice of fresh, peeled ginger
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground nutmeg
1 cup (250 ml) water

Cranberry French 75

Ice cubes
6 oz (185 ml) gin
½ cup (125 ml) cranberry simple syrup
¼ cup (60 ml) lemon juice (1–2 lemons)
12 oz (355 ml) chilled Champagne or dry sparkling white wine
Fresh cranberries and rosemary sprigs, for garnish

Make the cranberry simple syrup

- Place the cranberries, sugar, orange zest, ginger, and nutmeg in a medium saucepan. Stir in the water.
- Bring to a low boil over medium heat and simmer until the sugar is dissolved, stirring occasionally, about 4 minutes. Remove from the heat and let cool to room temperature.
- Strain the syrup through a fine mesh sieve into an airtight glass bottle or jar, cover, and store in the refrigerator for up to 1 month.

Make the Cranberry French 75

- Fill a cocktail shaker halfway with ice and then add the gin, cranberry syrup, and lemon juice. Shake well and divide between four champagne flutes. Top with Champagne and

garnish with a fresh cranberry speared with a rosemary sprig set across the top of the glass.

Menu Fourteen Hunter's Moon Dinner

SERVES 4

- Leek and Corn Chowder
- Fennel, Apple, and Cabbage Slaw with Citrus Dressing
- Venison Leg Roast with Blackberry Sauce
- Roast Acorn Squash
- Oat Baked Apples
- Blackberry Sage Tonic

I love the range of colours and textures in this menu. Humble leeks and corn team up in a creamy, sweet soup to kick things off, followed by a citrus-dressed slaw of thinly sliced fall fruit and vegetables that refreshes the palate before the dramatic main course, which features the star of the show: venison. Its rosy, medium-rare meat is lean with a tender, fine grain, set off perfectly by a sweet and savoury sauce of blackberries. Dessert continues the textural drama with a riff on apple crumble—and the drink for this menu is a gorgeous, intense purple colour.

Leek and Corn Chowder

Serves 4

This soup is a mashup of my kids' two favourite soups: potato leek soup and corn chowder. The leeks slowly melt into the butter, becoming ever sweeter and richer. The corn adds even more sweetness, and the cream works with the potatoes to slightly thicken this comforting fall soup.

4 strips thick-cut bacon
¼ cup (60 ml) unsalted butter
2 cups (500 ml) sliced leeks
2 cloves garlic, minced
¼ cup (60 ml) all-purpose flour
4 cups (1 L) vegetable stock
4 cups (1 L) fresh or frozen and thawed corn kernels
1½ cups (375 ml) peeled, diced russet potato
1 cup (250 ml) half-and-half cream
½ tsp (2.5 ml) Tabasco sauce
1 large sprig of savory
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper
½ cup (125 ml) cream cheese, cubed
3 Tbsp (45 ml) finely sliced chives, plus extra for garnish
2 tsp (10 ml) lemon juice

- Line a plate with paper towels.
- Cut the bacon into pieces that are about 1 ×½ inch (2.5 × 1.25 cm). Place them in a large Dutch oven set over medium heat. Cook, flipping occasionally, until the bacon is rendered and crisp. Transfer the bacon to the prepared plate.
- Discard any excess bacon fat from the Dutch oven and reduce the heat to medium-low. Add the butter and sliced leeks to the pan and sauté until softened, 3–4 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until softened, about 1 more minute.
- Stir in the flour and cook, stirring continuously, for 1 minute. Pour in the stock, whisking until the flour is incorporated into the

liquid and there are no lumps. Stir in the corn, potatoes, cream, hot sauce, savory, salt, and pepper.

- Bring the mixture to a simmer, still over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, until the potatoes are tender and the soup has started to thicken, about 15–20 minutes.
- Whisk in the cream cheese until it’s melted and blended in, then add the chives and lemon juice. Stir and season to taste with extra salt and pepper, if necessary. Stir in the bacon bits, reserving a few for a garnish.
- Serve in bowls topped with the reserved bacon and chives.

Fennel, Apple, and Cabbage Slaw with Citrus Dressing

Serves 4

This light, colourful slaw is tasty any time of year, but it’s especially good with fresh fall apples and cabbage. Core the apple but leave the peel on for extra fibre and colour. Daikon and turnips make great additions to this salad too.

2 cups (500 ml) shredded red or green cabbage

1 cup (250 ml) shredded fennel
1 cup (250 ml) grated apple, peel on
½ cup (125 ml) grated carrot
½ cup (125 ml) thinly sliced radishes
1 lemon, zest and juice
1 orange, zest and juice
3 Tbsp (45 ml) vegetable oil
2 Tbsp (30 ml) red wine vinegar
1 tsp (5 ml) fine salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground cumin

- In a large bowl, combine the cabbage, fennel, apples, carrots, and radishes.
- In a small bowl, whisk together the lemon zest and juice, orange zest and juice, oil, vinegar, salt, pepper, and cumin. Pour half the dressing over the veggies and toss well. Taste and add more dressing as desired, then serve.

Venison Leg Roast with Blackberry Sauce

Serves 4

This is a fantastic fall supper, especially after a day of blackberry picking. Venison is very lean and tender when it’s cooked right. It’s best served medium-rare to medium. Overcooking will make it tough and dry, so use a meat thermometer if you have one.

1 tsp (5 ml) chopped rosemary

1 tsp (5 ml) crushed juniper berries
1 tsp (5 ml) kosher salt
¾ tsp (4 ml) ground black pepper
5 Tbsp (75 ml) olive oil, divided
1½ lb (750 g) boneless venison leg roast
¼ cup (60 ml) finely diced shallot
1 cup (250 ml) fresh blackberries
2 Tbsp (30 ml) red wine vinegar
1 Tbsp (15 ml) honey
½ cup (125 ml) beef stock
2 Tbsp (30 ml) unsalted butter

- In a small bowl, mix together the rosemary, juniper berries, salt, pepper, and 3 tablespoons (45 ml) olive oil. Rub it all over the venison and let it marinate for an hour at room temperature.
- Preheat the oven to 325°F (160°C).
- Warm 1 tablespoon (15 ml) oil in an oven-safe, heavy-bottomed frying pan over medium-high heat. Once it's hot, sear the roast, turning it every 2 minutes until all sides are browned, about 8 minutes, then transfer the pan to the oven. Cook for 15 minutes and then use a meat thermometer to check the temperature of the venison. If it's 125°F–130°F (51°C–54°C) remove it to a rimmed plate and tent with foil. If it's not quite there, continue to roast, until it reaches 125° (51°C) for medium-rare or 130°F (54°C) for medium.
  (The temperature of the centre of the roast will increase enough to bring it to temperature while it's resting.)
- In a clean small saucepan, heat the remaining 1 tablespoon (15 ml) of oil over medium heat. Add the shallots and cook, stirring frequently, until translucent, about 2 minutes. Stir in the berries, vinegar, honey, drippings from the resting venison, and the stock. Let the mixture simmer, stirring occasionally, until the blackberries and liquid have cooked down to a thicker consistency, about 8 more minutes. Remove the pan from the

heat and whisk in the butter. Season the sauce to taste with salt and pepper.

- Slice the venison into ¼–½-inch (0.5–1.25 cm) thin slices. Pour a few tablespoons (about 30 ml) of sauce on each plate, top with a few slices of venison and some ground pepper, and serve right away.

Cook’s notes

If you have a sous vide machine, this is a great time to use it to ensure your roast is perfectly cooked right through. Set the temperature to 130°F–135°F (54°C–57°C) (the roast won’t continue to cook while it rests the way it does if you use an oven), seal the raw, marinated venison in a plastic bag, removing as much air as possible, and place it in the hot water. Let it cook for 45 minutes to 1 hour, depending on how thick the meat is, then sear it in a very hot pan for just 1–2 minutes before resting and slicing as described in the recipe.

Roast Acorn Squash

Serves 4

This deceptively simple side dish uses a touch of water and butter to keep the squash moist while it cooks, and rosemary adds a subtle fragrant flavour. Bright orange squash looks stunning when served alongside the rosy pink venison and deep purple blackberry sauce in this menu. You can see these featured as a side on page 230.

1 acorn squash
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground black pepper
¼ tsp (1 ml) cayenne pepper
2 Tbsp (30 ml) unsalted butter, divided
2 Tbsp (30 ml) water, divided
2 × 2-inch (5 cm) sprigs of rosemary

- Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C).
- Cut the acorn squash in half and scoop out the seeds and pulp. (Roast the seeds for a snack.) Place the squash halves in a small roasting pan, cut side up.
- Sprinkle the salt, pepper, and cayenne evenly over both halves and then fill each half with 1 tablespoon (15 ml) of butter, 1 tablespoon (15 ml) of water, and a sprig of rosemary. Place the squash in the oven and roast, uncovered, until the flesh is easily pierced with a fork, about 35–45 minutes.
- Cut the two halves in half and serve a quarter to each guest.

Oat Baked Apples

Serves 4

Individual baked apples stuffed with brown sugar, cinnamon, and oats are the perfect way to celebrate apple season. Serve them alone or with a scoop of whipped cream or vanilla ice cream.

4 medium baking apples
3 Tbsp (45 ml) softened butter
¼ cup (60 ml) packed brown sugar
⅓ cup (80 ml) quick oats
¼ cup (60 ml) chopped walnuts
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground cinnamon
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground nutmeg
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground cloves
Vanilla ice cream or whipped cream, to serve (optional)

- Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a rimmed baking pan with foil.
- Using an melon baller or small paring knife, carefully core the apples from the top down to about ½ inch (1.25 cm) from the bottom, but don’t cut all the way through the bottom of the apple. Place the apples on the prepared baking sheet.
- In a medium bowl, mix together the butter, brown sugar, oats, walnuts, cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves. Stuff equal amounts of this mixture into the top of each apple. Slight overstuffing is okay, because the filling will shrink during cooking. Don’t worry about it spilling over during cooking.
- Bake until the apples are tender, about 40 minutes. Serve hot or warm with ice cream or whipped cream, if using.

Blackberry Sage Tonic

Serves 4

Wild blackberries are such a treat in the fall. This drink is a wonderful, slightly herbal take on plain blackberry juice. Because wild berries vary in their sweetness and acidity, taste the finished juice before serving and adjust with extra lemon or honey if needed.

6 cups (1.5 L) blackberries
½ cup (125 ml) honey
1 cup (250 ml) water
8 fresh or dried sage leaves
2 Tbsp (30 ml) lemon juice
Ice cubes, to serve
4 small sprigs of sage or 4 wheels of lemon, for garnish (optional)

- Combine the blackberries, honey, water, and sage leaves in a medium saucepan set over medium heat. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and simmer until the berries are easily mashed, about 10 minutes.
- Let the juice cool to room temperature, mash the berries with a potato masher or fork, then strain through a fine mesh sieve into a pitcher. Stir in the lemon juice, taste and adjust with extra honey or lemon if you like, and refrigerate until cold.
- To serve, place ice in tall or short glasses and pour in the juice. Garnish with a small sprig of sage or a lemon wheel, if using, and serve.

Menu Fifteen

The Heart of the Home

SERVES 6

- Rosemary, Grape, and Olive Focaccia
- Fall Apple and Blue Cheese Salad
- White Bean Stew with Kale and Fennel
- No-Bake Spiced Pumpkin Cheesecakes
- Peach Gin and Sonic

Warm baking bread and a fragrant simmering stew are a loving welcome home for anyone on a cold fall night. The peach cocktail is a light drink to accompany this otherwise hearty fall dinner, and the flavourful focaccia pairs well with both the salad and the main course. I adore hearty greens in salads, but I especially adore them cooked in soups and stews or simply braised on their own. In this dinner, you get them raw in the rich, tangy salad and softened in the creamy bean stew. Dessert is nostalgic, no-bake pumpkin cheesecake jars with a brown butter crust that can be made ahead.

Rosemary, Grape, and Olive Focaccia

Makes 1 (10-inch/25 cm) round loaf

Focaccia is a fun and easy loaf to make, and it doesn’t need as much rising time as many other yeast breads. This one is sweet and savoury thanks to the combination of grapes and olives, and its dimples catch bits of fragrant rosemary and flaky sea salt. Here on the West Coast, there are some great companies harvesting sea salt and processing it over low heat to retain its minerals and crunchy, crystallized texture. If you have fancy salt, this is the place to use it.

1½ cups (375 ml) warm water
1 Tbsp (15 ml) honey
2 tsp (10 ml) active dry yeast
1½ tsp (7.5 ml) sea salt
6 Tbsp (90 ml) extra virgin olive oil, divided
3 cups (750 ml) all-purpose flour
2 Tbsp (30 ml) cornmeal
1 cup (250 ml) grapes, cut in half
½ cup (125 ml) pitted olives
2 tsp (10 ml) rosemary leaves
1 tsp (5 ml) flaky sea salt, for topping

- In a large mixing bowl, mix the water with the honey to dissolve the honey. Stir in the yeast and let sit until bubbly, about 10 minutes. (If it doesn’t foam or bubble, you’ll need to start again with fresh yeast.)
- Stir the salt and ¼ cup (60 ml) oil into the yeast mixture, then add the flour, 1 cup (250 ml) at a time, stirring until the dough is ragged and all the flour is incorporated. Scatter some flour over a clean work surface and knead the dough until it is smooth, about 4 minutes. Let it rest for 10 minutes to relax the gluten and make it easier to press into the baking pan.
- Brush a baking sheet or large (10–12-inch/25–30 cm) cast iron pan with 1 tablespoon (15 ml) of olive oil and sprinkle the cornmeal over top.
- Press the dough into the cast iron pan or shape it into a round on the baking sheet until it is about ½ inch (1.25 cm) thick, cover

loosely, and let rise until doubled, about 40 minutes.

- Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C).
- Arrange the grapes, olives, and rosemary on the dough, press them into it, then sprinkle with flaky salt. Using your fingers, make dimples all over the focaccia, drizzle with the remaining 1 tablespoon (15 ml) of olive oil, and then let it rise, uncovered, until it’s increased in size by about one-third. Allow roughly 30 minutes for this rise.
- Bake until golden, 20–25 minutes.
- Remove the bread from the oven and let cool in the pan for 10 minutes. Use a large spatula to transfer the focaccia to a wire rack to continue cooling to your preferred temperature.
- Serve warm or at room temperature.

Fall Apple and Blue Cheese Salad

Serves 6

This is a special salad full of rich fall flavours and an apple cider vinaigrette that keeps it bright-tasting. It takes a little more planning because you have to roast the yams ahead of time, but that’s also the beauty of it. All the components can be made or prepped ahead of time and are sturdy enough that they’ll stay firm and delicious for 30–60 minutes after being dressed. I use lemon thyme because it has a fruitier scent and flavour than French thyme. Feel free to use another fruity thyme if you prefer.

Salad

2 cups (500 ml) peeled, cubed yams
4 tsp (20 ml) olive oil
1 cup (250 ml) green beans
8 cups (2 L) arugula or other hearty mixed greens
2 apples, cored and thinly sliced
¾ cup (185 ml) crumbled creamy blue cheese (cambozola works well)
½ cup (125 ml) walnut halves

Dressing

3 Tbsp (45 ml) apple cider vinegar
3 Tbsp (45 ml) olive oil
2 Tbsp (30 ml) honey
1 tsp (5 ml) finely chopped lemon thyme
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground pepper

Make the salad

- Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Prepare an ice bath. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
- In a medium bowl, toss the yams with the oil, place them on the prepared baking sheet, and roast until fork-tender, about 20–25 minutes. Set aside.
- Blanch the green beans in boiling salted water for 2 minutes, then plunge them into the ice bath to stop the cooking. Let them drain in a colander until you’re ready to serve.

Make the dressing

- In a small bowl, whisk together the vinegar, oil, honey, thyme, salt, and pepper.

Assemble the salad

- Place the arugula in a large bowl and add the sliced apples. Pour in half of the dressing, toss gently to combine, and spoon the dressed salad onto a long platter. Arrange the yams, green beans, blue cheese, and walnuts over top. Drizzle the remaining salad dressing over everything and serve.

White Bean Stew with Kale and Fennel

Serves 6

This is a comforting stew for cold weather thanks to its fragrant fennel and anise and creamy white beans. It’s a great way to use any hearty greens growing in your garden. Kale, chard, collards, and spinach all work well in this recipe. Note that you need to start soaking your beans at least 6 hours before you plan to start cooking this.

2 cups (500 ml) dried navy beans
1 Tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
1 lb (500 g) Italian sausage
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 tsp (5 ml) anise seed
¼ tsp (1 ml) red pepper flakes
2 cups (500 ml) diced yellow onion
1 cup (250 ml) diced carrot
1 cup (250 ml) diced celery
1 fennel bulb, outer tough leaves discarded, bulb thinly sliced, and greens reserved for garnish
1 cup (250 ml) diced fresh tomatoes or canned tomatoes with their juice
2 cups (500 ml) water
4 cups (1 L) chicken stock
Salt and ground black pepper
4 cups (1 L) kale

- Soak the beans in 6 cups (1.5 L) of water for 6–8 hours or overnight, then drain and rinse them well.
- In a large pot, warm the olive oil over medium heat. Once the oil is hot and shimmering, slide the sausage out of its casings and into the pot. Using a spatula, break the meat into chunks. Fry, stirring occasionally, until it is cooked through and browned in spots, about 8 minutes.
- Stir in the garlic, anise seeds, and red pepper flakes. Add the onions, carrots, and celery, stir to combine, and cook until fragrant and starting to soften, about 5 minutes. Stir in the fennel and cook for 5 more minutes, stirring occasionally, then pour in the beans, tomatoes, water, and stock.

- Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer uncovered, stirring every 10–15 minutes, until the beans are cooked and the liquid has reduced by half, about 1 hour. (If you are using collard greens instead of kale, add them at the 30-minute point.) Taste and adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper. Stir in the kale, reduce the heat to low, and let the kale cook and soften for about 5 minutes before serving.

Cook’s notes

If you use collards, you’ll need to let them cook for at least 10–15 minutes, rather than 5 minutes.

No-Bake Spiced Pumpkin Cheesecakes

Serves 6

Tangy and cool, these easy no-bake pumpkin cheesecakes are flavoured with all the warm spices of fall. Kids seem to enjoy this recipe, and the brown butter in the crust adds a complexity that adults will find irresistible.

Crust

2 cups (500 ml) graham cracker crumbs
¼ cup (60 ml) packed brown sugar
½ cup (125 ml) salted butter

Filling

2 cups (500 ml) cream cheese
1 cup (250 ml) whipping cream
1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla extract
1 cup (250 ml) pumpkin purée (see Cook's note)
⅔ cup (160 ml) icing sugar
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground cinnamon
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground nutmeg
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground cloves
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground ginger
¼ tsp (1 ml) finely ground black pepper
Whipped cream, to serve (optional)

Make the crust

- Place the graham cracker crumbs and sugar in a small bowl. Mix to combine.
- Place the butter in a small saucepan over medium-low heat. Let it melt, stirring occasionally and watching until the milk solids turn toasty brown. Pour the brown butter over the graham cracker crumbs and sugar and stir until the crumbs are evenly moistened. Pack the mixture equally into six 1-cup (250 ml) canning jars or similar-sized ramekins and set aside while you make the filling.

Make the filling

- In a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the cream cheese, cream, and vanilla on medium-high speed until smooth, about 3–4 minutes.
- Add the pumpkin purée, icing sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, ginger, and pepper and beat until smooth and fluffy.
- Divide the cream cheese mixture equally between the jars and refrigerate, uncovered, for 2 hours. If you're making these ahead of time, cover them with a lid or plastic wrap and keep refrigerated for up to 2 days.
- Serve with whipped cream, if using.

Cook's notes

If you don't have pumpkin purée, you can use the same volume of pumpkin pie filling, but omit the icing sugar.

Peach Gin and Sonic

Serves 6

I love a good gin and tonic, and in this twist on the classic, I pair fresh fall peaches with soda and tonic (hence the reference to sonic, not tonic) to add fresh fruit flavour without making the drink too sweet. Use your favourite botanical gin and garnish it with sprigs of garden herbs (lavender, mint, rosemary, etc.) that echo the flavours of your gin if you like. Remember to chill your gin in the freezer and the soda and tonic in the refrigerator for at least an hour before using them.

Peach purée

1 cup (250 ml) pitted and peeled peaches (about 1 large peach)
2 Tbsp (30 ml) granulated sugar
2 Tbsp (30 ml) lime juice

Gin and sonic

¾ cup (185 ml) peach purée
12 oz (355 ml) chilled gin
9 oz (270 ml) chilled tonic water
9 oz (270 ml) chilled soda water
6 peach slices and herb sprigs, for garnish (optional)

Make the peach purée

- Using a blender or a food processor fitted with a steel blade, purée the peaches with the sugar and lime juice until very smooth.

Make the gin and sonic

- Place 2 tablespoons (30 ml) of peach purée in each of four tall, ice-filled glasses. Top each glass with 2 ounces (60 ml) gin and 1½ ounces (45 ml) each of tonic and soda.
- Garnish each glass with a thin slice of peach and a herb sprig, if using, and serve immediately.

Winter

WINTER IN THE GARDEN

Winter is a time for rest, and the garden is a clear reflection of that. There are some things to do, but not nearly as much as there will be in the spring.

I love to sit with a coffee on Saturday mornings in winter and plan my garden for the upcoming year. My garden is divided into four zones, and I move each crop to a new zone every year for a 4-year rotation.

Winter is a good time for pruning, redesigning, removing, adding structures, and planning new things in the garden. Browse seed catalogues, make a wish list, and then edit it down to what you can realistically grow in your space. Sketch out your plans and remember to rotate your crops to keep the soil healthy.

Clean up your garden and equipment if you haven't already. Clean up old vegetables, fruits, and piles of fallen leaves, leaving seed pods and other natural sources of food and shelter until spring for the birds, bees, and other beneficial insects. Replenish mulch as needed to protect shrubs, reduce weeds, and feed your soil through the winter.

February marks the beginning of seed-planting season. Artichokes, lavender, asparagus, chives, bulbing fennel, leeks, and woody herbs all benefit from an early start indoors, and broad beans can be sown outside. A few weeks after that, you can start sowing peas. If you haven't sown seeds early indoors before, consult a gardening guide and be aware you will need some growing lights or a warm and bright greenhouse once the seeds sprout.

The winter garden harvest is mostly brassicas, root vegetables, and cold-hardy greens. Brassicas such as broccoli, cauliflower, kale, cabbage, and Brussels sprouts are known as winter vegetables because they can thrive in very cold temperatures. They form a sugar-based frost protection in their cells and become sweeter after a frost. Root vegetables turn some of their starches into sugar to protect them from freezing.

Shellfish is at its firm, briny best in these cold months, as are cod and halibut. There isn't much to forage, but conifer teas are a lovely warming treat after a snowy forest walk, and if it isn't snowy, you may find winter chanterelles or hedgehog mushrooms.

Harvest Now

- Beets
- Bok choy
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Chicory
- Collards
- Kale
- Leeks
- Mustard greens
- Onions
- Parsnips
- Potatoes
- Scallions
- Swiss chard
- Winter cress
- Woody herbs (e.g., rosemary, winter savory, thyme, sage, and lavender)

Forage Now

- Conifer needles (e.g., pine, fir, and spruce)
- Dandelions
- Hedgehog mushrooms

- Juniper berries
- Pinenuts
- Turkey tail mushrooms
- Watercress
- Winter chanterelles

Direct-Sow Now

- Arugula
- Broad beans
- Collards
- Corn salad
- Garlic
- Kale
- Mustard greens
- Parsley
- Peas
- Radishes
- Spinach

Start Indoors

- Artichokes
- Asparagus
- Broccoli
- Cabbage

- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Lavender
- Leeks
- Lettuce
- Onions
- Peppers
- Radicchio
- Strawberries
- Tomatoes

These plants take a while to sprout, but nature is amazing and these tiny seeds know just what to do and when to do it.

Winter Sowing

If you’re antsy to get an early start in the garden, consider doing some planting in winter. Winter-sown seeds grow into strong seedlings that don’t tend to damp off. They don’t need to be potted up as they grow and are already hardened off when you’re ready to put them into the ground. The natural daylight will stop your seedlings from getting leggy, so there’s no need to worry about an arbitrary last frost date. Sowing outside also means you’re not taking up precious indoor space.

The winter sowing method requires planting when freezing temperatures (or your area’s coldest temperatures) arrive to stay until the spring warm-up. Good candidates for winter sowing include onions, leeks, scallions, kale, hardy salad greens, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, and perennial herbs. Seeds whose packaging says they can be direct-sown outside in fall or early spring are good bets too.

Collect plastic containers like milk jugs, ice-cream buckets, 2-litre plastic pop bottles, or any other tall, clear, plastic containers. Rescue them from your recycling bin and offer to take them off the hands of family and friends. They should be large enough to hold at least 3–4 inches (7.5–10 cm) of soil with 4–6 inches (10–15 cm) of headspace for the seedlings to grow.

Clean your containers and cut them horizontally three-quarters of the way through the middle, leaving a small “hinge” attached so you can open them to fill and plant, then close them. Make some holes in the top for ventilation and some in the bottom for drainage. Use a drill or hammer and nail to do this.

Fill the containers halfway or 3–4 inches (7.5–10 cm) deep with sterilized potting soil, and plant seeds to the depth stated on the packets. You can plant many and thin them later or space them apart as per package guidelines.

Label your containers with a marker or tape that won’t fade in the sun or with plant markers in the container. Water well until the soil is evenly moist. Let the containers drain and replace the lids or tops, securing them with duct tape if necessary.

Finally, place them outside in a spot that will get rain and sun but be protected from harsh winds. Your mini greenhouses can stay here

until the weather starts to warm or the seedlings outgrow their containers. If the weather turns unexpectedly hot, vent the lids and water the seedlings to prevent overheating.

As the days lengthen and get warmer, you'll start to see your seedlings sprout. Let them grow in their tiny home until they are almost touching the tops of their containers. Then remove the lids, keep watering, and let them keep growing. If freezing temperatures return, cover your seedlings with a sheet or cloche of some sort overnight. Don't be tempted to bring them indoors.

Once they have at least one pair of true leaves and the soil is workable, the seedlings can be planted directly in the ground. Because they were germinated outside, they are already hardened off and ready to go.

WINTER IN THE KITCHEN

MENU SIXTEEN
WINTER SOLSTICE SUPPER
SERVES 4

Oysters on the Half Shell

Cornbread

Clams, Garlic, and Winter Greens

Apple Cardamom Galette

West Coast Gin Martini

MENU SEVENTEEN
Warm in the Storm
Serves 6

Rillettes

Roast Fennel with Cranberry Agrodolce

French Onion Short Rib Stew

Celery Root and Potato Mash

Gingerbread Spice Cake

Spiked Coffee Bar

MENU EIGHTEEN
Pacific North West and East
Serves 6

Miso Soup with Pine Mushrooms and Winter Greens

Sesame Wilted Spinach Salad

Sticky Garlic Ginger Meatballs with Cranberry Plum Sauce

Cranberry Cumin Rice

Rosemary Pear Sorbet

Green Tea with Lavender-Infused Honey

MENU NINETEEN
Winter Celebration
Serves 6

Crab Fritters with Spicy Lemon Wasabi Dip

Slivered Winter Vegetables with Apple Ginger Dressing

West Coast Seafood Stew with Saffron Aioli

Cranberry Sour Cream Bundt Cake

Negroni Sbagliato

MENU TWENTY
Snow Moon Supper
Serves 4

Scallops Motoyaki

Simplest Winter Salad

Chicken and Parsnip Stew

Chocolate Beetroot Cake

Grapefruit Rosemary Spritz

Menu Sixteen

Winter Solstice Supper

SERVES 4

- Oysters on the Half Shell
- Cornbread
- Clams, Garlic, and Winter Greens
- Apple Cardamom Galette
- West Coast Gin Martini

This menu has a retro feel with its icy-cold martini and fresh briny raw oysters. Clams and hearty greens are at their best in the cold months of winter and together, they make a great main course with a deliciously fragrant broth. Cornbread easily soaks up the last bits of broth before finishing with a rustic but also elegant apple galette.

Oysters on the Half Shell

Serves 4

2–3 dozen small, shucked oysters
Crushed ice on a platter to nestle the oysters into after shucking
Lemon wedges and hot sauce, for serving
1 or more of the sauces to the right

Ginger Scallion

¼ cup (60 ml) slivered scallions
1 tsp (5 ml) grated ginger
¼ cup (60 ml) rice wine vinegar
2 Tbsp (30 ml) soy sauce
2 Tbsp (30 ml) mirin
1 tsp (5 ml) sesame oil

- Combine all the ingredients in a small bowl and refrigerate until ready to use.

Horseradish Caesar

1 Tbsp (15 ml) freshly grated horseradish
¼ cup (60 ml) Clamato juice
1 Tbsp (15 ml) lime juice
1 tsp (5 ml) Worcestershire sauce
1 Tbsp (15 ml) vodka (optional)

- Whisk all the ingredients together in a small bowl and refrigerate until ready to use.

Champagne Apple

¼ cup (60 ml) finely diced, peeled apple
¼ cup (60 ml) champagne vinegar

- Combine both ingredients and refrigerate until ready to use.

Cucumber Jalapeño

½ cup (125 ml) peeled and deseeded English cucumber
1 small jalapeño
2 Tbsp (30 ml) lime juice
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt

- Finely chop the cucumber and jalapeno and mix with the lime juice and salt, or puree in a food processor until smooth.

Transfer to a small bowl and refrigerate until ready to use.

Cook’s notes

While we can often source oysters year-round on the West Coast, winter is prime time for these briny bivalves. In the warmer months, when they are spawning and feeding heavily, they tend to be softer and fatter with a milky mouthfeel. In the winter, they slow their eating and filter more water, making them firmer and extra briny.

Cornbread

Makes 1 (9-inch/23 cm) square cornbread

If you harvested corn in the fall and froze it, this recipe is for you. Thaw your corn before mixing it into the batter for even baking. To reheat day-old cornbread, place it in a paper bag and then warm it at 350°F (180°C) for 10 minutes.

1 cup (250 ml) all-purpose flour
1 cup (250 ml) medium-ground cornmeal
2 Tbsp (30 ml) granulated sugar
1 Tbsp (15 ml) baking powder
1 tsp (5 ml) baking soda
1 tsp (5 ml) fine salt
2 eggs
¾ cup (185 ml) buttermilk
½ cup (125 ml) melted, unsalted butter, slightly cooled
1 cup (250 ml) corn kernels

- Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C). Grease the bottom and sides of a 9-inch (23 cm) square baking pan.
- In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, cornmeal, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. In a small bowl, beat the eggs, buttermilk, and butter together. Pour the egg mixture into the dry mixture. Add the corn, stir just until mixed, and then pour the batter into the prepared baking pan.
- Bake until the edges are golden and a toothpick inserted in the centre of the cornbread comes out clean, about 25 minutes. Let cool in the pan for 15 minutes before cutting and serving warm.

Clams, Garlic, and Winter Greens

Serves 4

I love steamed clams and I love a good broth, so this recipe is one of my favourite comfort foods on a cold night. The hearty winter greens add a little silky earthiness to balance out the briny clams and light, creamy broth. I've used garlic and fresh herbs to flavour this version, but if you have frozen cubes of pesto, basil, or tarragon (see page 10) on hand, this is a great place to use them for a shortcut.

2 Tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
4 cloves garlic, minced
½ cup (125 ml) diced shallot
1 cup (250 ml) chopped flat-leaf parsley
½ cup (125 ml) chopped tarragon
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper
½ tsp (2.5 ml) anise seed
¼ tsp (1 ml) red pepper flakes
1 cup (250 ml) dry white wine
1 cup (250 ml) diagonally sliced scallions
3 cups (750 ml) chicken stock
1 cup (250 ml) whipping cream (optional)
4 lb (1.8 kg) fresh live clams, well rinsed
6 cups (1.5 L) roughly chopped kale

- In a large, heavy-bottomed soup pot, warm the oil over medium heat and then add the garlic and shallots. Cook, stirring frequently, until the shallot is translucent, 2–3 minutes. Add the parsley, tarragon, salt, pepper, anise seeds, and red pepper flakes and cook for 1 more minute.
- Turn the heat to high and pour in the wine, letting the alcohol cook out and reduce for 3 minutes, then add the scallions, stock, and cream, if using. Bring to a boil, taste, and season with more salt and pepper if needed. Add the clams, stir, and place the lid on the pot. Let the clams cook for 4 minutes, then remove the lid and add the greens. Stir until the greens are wilted and all the clams are open, about 3–4 more minutes.

- Ladle the clams into bowls with lots of broth, discarding any unopened clams.

Cook’s notes

For a Southeast Asian flavour, use basil and cilantro instead of parsley, tarragon and coconut cream instead of whipping cream, and fish sauce and lime juice instead of salt.

Apple Cardamom Galette

Serves 4, with leftovers

A galette is a free-form pastry topped with fruit. It’s a rustic dish with no top crust, so there’s no pressure to make it look fancy. This easy apple version is warmed with cardamom and honey, and the leftover slices make a tasty breakfast paired with coffee.

Pastry

1½ cups (375 ml) all-purpose flour
¾ cup (185 ml) salted butter, cold, cut into ½-inch (1.25 cm) pieces
⅓ cup (80 ml) cold water

Topping

4 Tbsp (60 ml) granulated sugar, divided
1 Tbsp (15 ml) all-purpose flour
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground cinnamon
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground cardamom
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground nutmeg
⅛ tsp (0.5 ml) salt
4 large baking apples, cored and cut lengthwise into ¼-inch (0.5 cm) thick slices (peeling is optional)
2 Tbsp (30 ml) honey
2 Tbsp (30 ml) melted butter
Fresh thyme leaves and flowers, for garnish (optional)
Whipped cream or ice cream, for serving (optional)

Make the pastry

- Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
- In a food processor fitted with a steel blade, pulse the flour with the butter just until the butter breaks down into the size of peas, about 5 seconds. Sprinkle the cold water over the mixture and pulse just until moistened, about 5–10 more seconds. Transfer the dough to a lightly floured work surface, knead it two or three times, just until it comes together, and then shape it into a disk. Lightly dust your work surface with more flour and roll the dough into a large round, about 16 inches (40 cm) in diameter and ¼ inch (0.5 cm) thick, and place it on the prepared baking sheet. Cover loosely and let it rest at cool room temperature (64°F/18°C is ideal) while you prepare the topping.

Make the topping and assemble the galette

- In a small bowl, combine 2 tablespoons (30 ml) of sugar with the flour, cinnamon, cardamom, nutmeg, and salt. Sprinkle this mixture over the pastry, leaving a 1-inch (2.5 cm) bare border. Arrange the apple slices on top in overlapping circles to within 2 inches (5 cm) of the edge of the pastry.
- Fold the dough loosely over the edge of the apples, pinching it to keep it round as you go. Drizzle the honey and then the melted butter over the apples, then sprinkle the remaining sugar over and refrigerate for 10 minutes before baking.
- Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C).
- Bake the galette in the centre of the oven until the apples are tender and the crust is golden and cooked through, 45–50 minutes. Slide the pastry carefully onto a wire rack and let it cool for 10–15 minutes before serving with a garnish of fresh thyme, if using, and a scoop of vanilla ice cream or whipped cream, if you like.

Cook’s notes

You can make the dough ahead of time. After you’ve shaped it into a disk, transfer it to an airtight container and store it in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Take it out of the refrigerator 20 minutes before you plan to use it.

You can make this with an equal amount of pears instead of apples if you like.

Gardener’s note

Apples are extremely well suited to growing on the West Coast and there are almost endless varieties to choose from, including many dwarf varieties for small gardens. Consider your space and unique

garden and pick yours accordingly. Once established, most trees produce prolifically so be sure to have some favourite preserving recipes ready!

West Coast Gin Martini

Serves 4

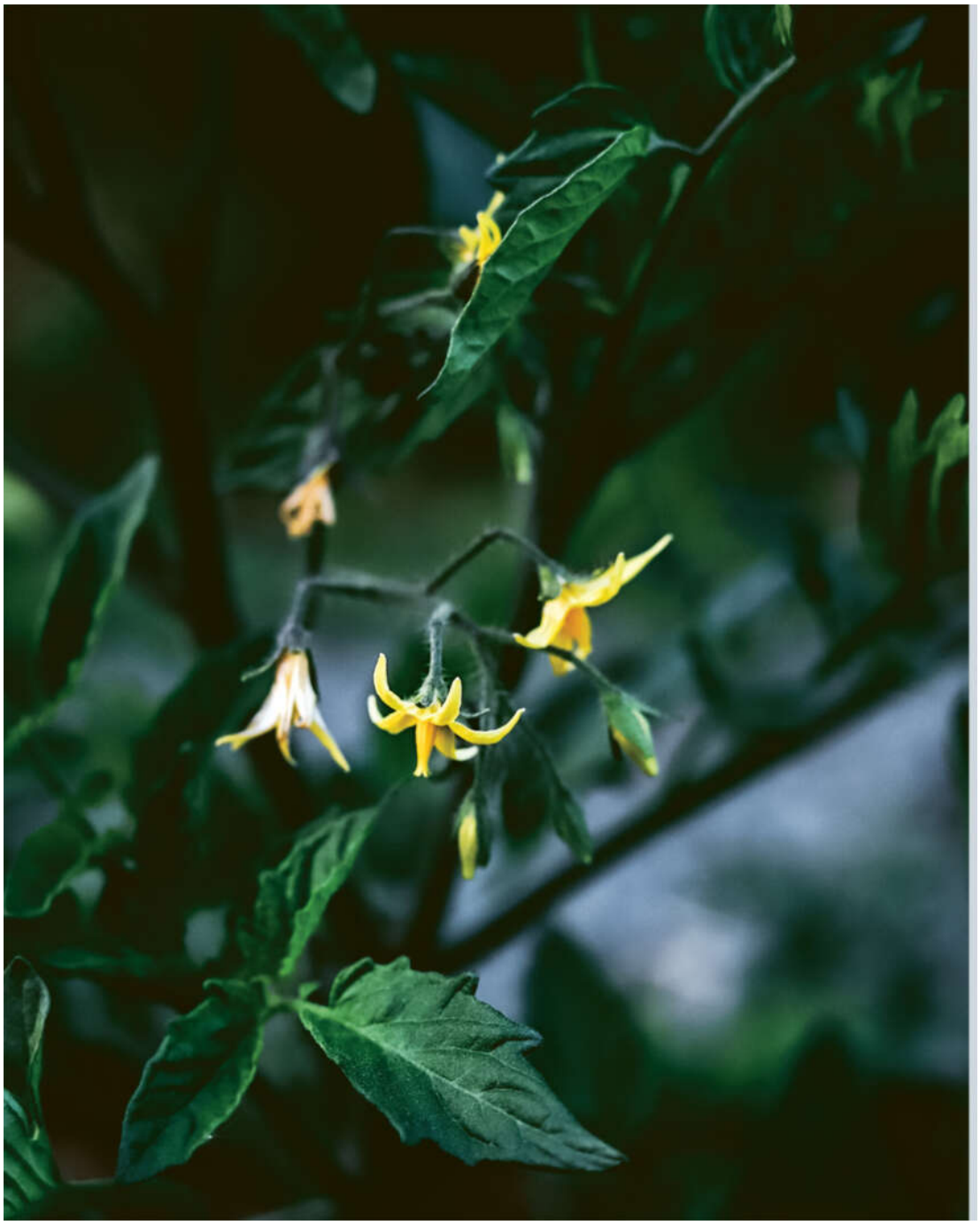
Here on the West Coast we have many amazing artisanal gins that make a great martini. Of course, you can garnish martinis to each guest's taste with olives, olive juice, or a simple citrus twist, but I love this bright and savoury combination of a lemon twist and a petite rosette of salty, cold-smoked sockeye salmon. For a vegetarian version, garnish it with pickled nasturtium seeds (page 361).

Cubed ice
2 oz (60 ml) dry vermouth
10 oz (310 ml) gin
1 lemon
4 small thin strips of cold-smoked salmon, each rolled into a rosette

- Put four martini glasses in the refrigerator or freezer 30–60 minutes before you plan to make the cocktails.
- Fill a small pitcher with cubed ice. Pour the vermouth and gin over the ice and stir gently to chill.
- Remove the glasses from the refrigerator or freezer and strain the martinis into each glass.
- Using a zester or vegetable peel and holding the lemon over a glass, remove a thin strip of lemon zest and let it drop into the glass. Repeat for the remaining three glasses. Place a small salmon rosette in the bottom of each and serve.

Cook's notes

My husband makes a mean cocktail and his top tip is to serve a cold drink very cold. Store your gin in the freezer and vermouth in the refrigerator, have plenty of large ice cubes, and chill your glasses if space and time allow.



Menu Seventeen Warm in the Storm

SERVES 6

- Rillettes
- Roast Fennel with Cranberry Agrodolce
- French Onion Short Rib Stew
- Celery Root and Potato Mash
- Gingerbread Spice Cake
- Spiked Coffee Bar

A hearty menu for a stormy night, this is also a great meal for entertaining because both the Quebecois-inspired rillettes and the caramelized onion short ribs taste great a day or two later, so they're perfect for making ahead of time. Fennel with agrodolce adds bright acidity and crisp texture to the meal and celery root adds sweetness and extra earthiness to mashed potatoes. The gingerbread cake is rich and moist with a tender light crumb. Paired with spiked coffee, it's a cozy way to finish on a cold winter night.

Rillettes

Makes about 3 cups (750 ml)

My brother served me rillettes after he spent a summer in Quebec. I was hooked immediately. Originally, butchers made them to use up pork scraps, and you can certainly use those if you have them. Otherwise, an inexpensive pork roast with some fat on it works perfectly.

2 lb (1 kg) pork shoulder roast with its fat
1 yellow onion, diced
2 cloves garlic, chopped
½ cup (125 ml) chopped flat-leaf or curly parsley, lovage, or chervil
1 Tbsp (15 ml) fresh thyme
1 fresh or dried bay leaf
1½ tsp (7.5 ml) salt
1 tsp (5 ml) ground black pepper
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground nutmeg
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground cloves
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground cinnamon
2 cups (500 ml) water
1 cup (250 ml) dry white wine

- Trim and discard any excess fat from the pork, being sure to leave a little so the finished rillettes are moist, and cut the pork into large cubes.
- Place the cubed pork in a large, heavy-bottomed pot with a lid, add the remaining ingredients, and stir together. Set the pot over high heat, uncovered, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cover the pot with its lid. Cook, stirring every ½ hour or so, until the meat is falling-apart tender, 3–4 hours.
- Remove the lid and continue to cook, stirring frequently to prevent sticking, until there is only about 1 cup (250 ml) of liquid left, about 15–20 minutes. Turn off the heat and let cool for 15 minutes. Pour the remaining liquid into a heatproof cup or bowl and set aside. (I hold the pot with one hand and tip it toward a large heatproof cup and hold the solids back with a slotted

spoon in the other hand. If that sounds awkward, you may prefer to have someone help you with this part.)

- Discard the bay leaf and any stems from the thyme and then shred and stir the meat until the mixture has a thick, even texture. Pour between half and two-thirds of the cooking liquid back into the pot, stirring to make a spreadable mixture. (It will firm up as it cools.) Spoon 1–2 cups (250–500 ml) of the mixture into a serving bowl and divide the rest between 1-cup (250 ml) jars. Press the mixture down in the bowl and jars, then top with 1–2 tablespoons (15–30 ml) of the remaining cooking liquid. Chill the rillettes in the refrigerator and then top the containers with their lids. Freeze the extra jars for up to 6 months.
- To serve, bring the rillettes to room temperature and scrape off any fat from the top. Serve with grainy mustard, crackers or bread, and pickles or cornichons.

Cook’s notes

The traditional spice mixture for this recipe is a French blend called quatre épices. It is a mixture of about two parts black pepper to one part each of nutmeg, cinnamon, cloves, and sometimes ginger. It’s also used in many French ground meat recipes such as sausages, pâté, terrines, and rillettes and in some baked goods like cakes, spiced bread, and cookies.

Roast Fennel with Cranberry Agrodolce

Serves 6

In warmer months I love to eat fennel raw, but in the winter, I love to roast it to really highlight its natural sweet licorice flavour. Agrodolce is a sweet and savoury Italian condiment that works wonderfully with the fennel.

3 bulbs fennel
3 Tbsp (45 ml) olive oil, divided
1 tsp (5 ml) salt, divided
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper
2 Tbsp (30 ml) sliced shallot
2 Tbsp (30 ml) dried cranberries
2 Tbsp (30 ml) water
3 Tbsp (45 ml) chopped hazelnuts
⅛ tsp (0.5 ml) red pepper flakes
½ cup (125 ml) red wine vinegar
½ cup (125 ml) honey
3 Tbsp (45 ml) chopped curly parsley
1 Tbsp (15 ml) capers

- Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C).
- Remove the fennel fronds and reserve them for a garnish. Remove and discard any tough outer leaves. Halve the fennel bulbs lengthwise and place them in a roasting tray, cut side up. Drizzle 2 tablespoons (30 ml) of olive oil over top and season with ¾ teaspoon (4 ml) of salt and the pepper.
- Roast until tender and slightly caramelized, about 30 minutes.
- Meanwhile, make the agrodolce. In a small saucepan, warm the remaining tablespoon (15 ml) of olive oil over medium heat. Add the shallots and cook until translucent, 1–2 minutes. Add the cranberries and water and stir for 2 minutes while the cranberries plump up. Stir in the remaining salt, the hazelnuts, red pepper flakes, vinegar, and honey. Bring to a boil and then reduce the heat to medium-low and cook, stirring occasionally, until it is thick and syrupy, about 8 minutes. Stir in the parsley and capers and then remove from the heat.

- Place the roasted fennel on a platter, spoon the agrodolce over top, and serve while hot.

Cook’s notes

If you like the agrodolce, try serving it with robust cheeses (aged cheddar, stilton, etc.), roast pork, or other roasted vegetables.

Gardener’s note

Cranberries are farmed on the West Coast, where they thrive in the slightly acidic soil and wet conditions. I love to stock up on them in late fall when they are at their sweetest. I freeze some and dehydrate the rest. This recipe is a great way to use dehydrated cranberries.

French Onion Short Rib Stew

Serves 6

With a nod to French onion soup, deeply caramelized onions and browned bone-in beef create a stew with rich body and flavour. Despite its 48-hour time frame, it is very easy to make and your kitchen will smell heavenly as it gently bubbles on the stove.

4 Tbsp (60 ml) olive oil, divided
4 lb (1.8 kg) beef short ribs
1½ tsp (7.5 ml) salt, divided
1 tsp (5 ml) ground black pepper
4 large yellow onions, diced
1½ cups (375 ml) water, divided
4 cloves garlic, crushed
2 cups (500 ml) chopped carrots
1 cup (250 ml) diced celery
1 cup (250 ml) diced canned tomatoes with their juice
¾ cup (185 ml) parsley
4 fresh or dried bay leaves
2 large sprigs rosemary
2 large sprigs thyme
2 large sprigs savory
4 cups (1 L) low-sodium beef stock
2 cups (500 ml) fruity red wine

- Warm 2 tablespoons (30 ml) of oil in a large heavy-bottomed pot over medium-high heat. Place the short ribs in a single layer in the pot and season with the salt and pepper. (If they won’t all fit, fry them in two batches, using half the oil, salt, and pepper for each batch.) Brown them well on each side, about 10 minutes in total, then transfer them to a plate and set aside.
- Wipe out the pot and add the remaining 2 tablespoons (30 ml) oil, the onions, and ½ cup (125 ml) of water. Stir to combine, reduce the heat to medium-low, and put the lid on the pot. Let the onions cook until they have softened and are starting to caramelize, stirring every 5 minutes to prevent burning. This takes about 30 minutes. Remove the lid and continue to cook, stirring regularly, until all the onions are deep brown.

- Add the garlic. Cook for 1 more minute, then add the remaining water, carrots, celery, tomatoes, parsley, bay leaves, rosemary, thyme, savory, stock, and wine. Bring the stew to a low boil, then reduce the heat to low, place the lid on the pot, and simmer, stirring every hour, until the ribs are falling-apart tender, about 3–4 hours. If the broth evaporates too fast and the ribs aren't at least three-quarters covered, add a little water as needed.
- Remove from the heat, remove the lid, and let cool completely. Place the lid back on the pot and refrigerate overnight.
- On serving day, skim the fat off the top of the stew and discard it. Place the stew on the stove, uncovered, and bring it back to a boil over medium heat. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer until the broth is well reduced and thickened, 1–2 hours.

Cook's notes

Beef shanks make a good substitute for short ribs if you prefer. And for an extra level of flavour, try gremolata (page 29) instead of parsley. The ribs can be cooked up to 3 days before serving. If you want a thicker broth, mash up the carrots and celery. Serve the stew in bowls topped with chopped parsley and freshly grated horseradish, if you wish.

Celery Root and Potato Mash

Serves 6

I love the high-fibre, humble-looking, sweet, and earthy root vegetable known as both celery root and celeriac and try to use it whenever I can. Mixing it with potato makes for a more complex and interesting mash that pairs perfectly with the French onion short rib stew (page 281). Did you know you can slice it thin and enjoy it raw, too?

2 lb (1 kg) celery root
1 lb (500 g) russet potatoes
¾ cup (185 ml) light cream
3 Tbsp (45 ml) unsalted butter
1½ tsp (7.5 ml) salt
1 tsp (5 ml) ground black pepper

- Half-fill a large pot with well-salted water.
- Peel and cube the celery root and potatoes into 2-inch (5 cm) pieces and place in the pot of water. Bring to a boil over high heat. Once the water is boiling, reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer until the vegetables are fork-tender, 20–25 minutes. Drain them and let the steam evaporate for a few minutes.
- Return the celery root and potatoes to the pot and set over low heat. Mash the vegetables with a potato masher until smooth. Add the cream, butter, salt, and pepper and continue to mash until well combined. Season to taste with extra salt and pepper if needed and serve.

Gingerbread Spice Cake

Makes 1 (9-inch/23 cm) square cake

Top this dark, rich cake with a cloud of lightly sweetened whipped cream for a perfect finish to a winter supper.

Cake

1 cup (250 ml) unsweetened applesauce
¾ cup (185 ml) dark molasses
½ cup (125 ml) melted unsalted butter
¾ cup (185 ml) granulated sugar
2 large eggs
2 cups (500 ml) all-purpose flour
2 tsp (10 ml) baking soda
1 tsp (5 ml) baking powder
1 tsp (5 ml) ground cinnamon
1 tsp (5 ml) ground ginger
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground nutmeg
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground cloves
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) finely ground black pepper

Whipped cream

1½ cups (375 ml) whipping cream
2 Tbsp (30 ml) brown sugar
1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla extract

Make the cake

- Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Grease and flour the bottom and side of a 9-inch (23 cm) square cake pan.
- In a large bowl, beat the applesauce, molasses, butter, and sugar with an electric mixer on medium speed until blended. Add the eggs and blend until incorporated.
- In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, cloves, salt, and pepper. Add them to the molasses mixture. Beat on low speed until the flour is incorporated and then increase the speed to medium and beat until well mixed, about 1 more minute.

- Pour the batter into the prepared cake pan and bake until a toothpick inserted in the centre of the cake comes out clean, about 35–40 minutes. Cool the cake in its pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes, then invert it onto a board and flip it back onto the wire rack to finish cooling completely.

Make the whipped cream and serve

- In a medium bowl, beat the cream, sugar, and vanilla extract on medium-high speed until soft peaks form.
- Serve warm squares of gingerbread cake with a dollop of whipped cream over each piece.

Cook’s notes

For the best whipped cream, chill your bowl and beaters and keep your cream cold until you’re ready to use it.

Spiked Coffee Bar

Serves 6

Enjoying a coffee after dinner is a lovely social ritual and adding rich liqueur to it makes it a little extra special. There are so many great local liqueurs and whiskies on the West Coast, we're spoiled for choice. I've made some suggestions here, but choose between one and three of your favourites to offer to your guests. If you're serving this in the evening, consider making decaffeinated coffee. I've suggested spiked coffee, but of course you can choose non-alcoholic flavoured creams if you prefer.

6 cups (1.5 L) freshly brewed coffee
1 cup (250 ml) half-and-half or coffee cream
½ cup (125 ml) granulated sugar or ¾ cup (185 ml) sugar cubes
1 small bottle of local whisky
1–3 small bottles of local liqueur (walnut-infused nocino, maple cream liqueur, or Irish cream–style or coffee-flavoured liqueur)

- Set the coffee out on a buffet with mugs and spoons. Place the cream in a creamer and sugar in a nice bowl alongside the whisky and liqueurs and invite guests to flavour their coffee to taste.

Cook's notes

Fun fact. Your whisky's origin determines its spelling. Canadian, Japanese, and Scottish versions of the drink are usually spelled "whisky." American and Irish versions are usually spelled "whiskey." The differences go beyond spelling, but no matter how you spell it, choose the style of whisky you like the best!

Menu Eighteen Pacific North West and East

SERVES 6

- Miso Soup with Pine Mushrooms and Winter Greens
- Sesame Wilted Spinach Salad
- Sticky Garlic Ginger Meatballs with Cranberry Plum Sauce
- Cranberry Cumin Rice
- Rosemary Pear Sorbet
- Green Tea with Lavender-Infused Honey

This menu uses West Coast kitchen garden ingredients but looks across the Pacific for a little Japanese inspiration. A light miso soup is a nourishing start followed by boldly flavoured meatballs and spinach and colourful rice. The finish echoes the light start with a wintery pear sorbet and soothing green tea infused with garden lavender.

Miso Soup with Pine Mushrooms and Winter Greens

Serves 6

Most mushrooms work well with creamy sauces, but pine mushrooms, also known as matsutake, shine in light broths and stir-fries. This soup is earthy, warm, and comforting and gets its unique flavour from a combination of the miso paste and pine mushrooms. If you don’t have pine mushrooms, substitute any other thinly sliced

mushrooms. And if you can’t find seaweed, don’t worry. The soup is still delicious without it.

6 cups (1.5 L) water
1 large piece of kombu seaweed
⅓ cup (80 ml) miso paste
1½ cups (375 ml) winter greens, coarsely chopped
1 cup (250 ml) sliced pine mushrooms
1 cup (250 ml) diced firm tofu
1 tsp (5 ml) sesame oil
½ cup (125 ml) slivered chives or scallions
2 Tbsp (30 ml) toasted sesame seeds

- Place the water in a medium saucepan, add the kombu, and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Cook until the water is fragrant, about 10–20 minutes.
- Place the miso paste in a small bowl and whisk in ⅓ cup (80 ml) of fresh hot water until smooth. Stir the paste into the pot of simmering water. Add the greens, mushrooms, tofu, and sesame oil, stir, and heat through for 5 minutes.
- Remove and discard the piece of kombu. Then ladle into bowls and serve hot, topped with chives and toasted sesame seeds.

Cook’s notes

Pine mushrooms grow wild in the mid- to late fall and they freeze exceptionally well. Most mushrooms benefit from frying before freezing but pine mushrooms can be sliced and frozen raw for use throughout the winter in soups, stir-fries, and stews.

Sesame Wilted Spinach Salad

Serves 6

Most recipes that use winter greens are fairly versatile and this is no exception. Feel free to swap in kale, chard, or collards, depending on what is fresh and available.

3 Tbsp (45 ml) white sesame seeds
1 Tbsp (15 ml) vegetable oil
2 tsp (10 ml) sesame oil
1 clove garlic, minced
¼ cup (60 ml) oyster sauce
1 tsp (5 ml) rice vinegar
10 cups (2.5 L) (or 1 × 10 oz/280 g container) spinach

- In a large dry frying pan over medium heat, toast the sesame seeds until golden, stirring frequently to prevent burning. Add both oils and the garlic and stir again, cooking for 1 minute. Pour in the oyster sauce and vinegar, stirring to combine. Add the spinach a few handfuls at a time. Toss after adding, and once it’s wilted enough to make room, add more. Remove the frying pan from the heat as soon as you’ve added the last batch of spinach. Toss a few more times to coat it with sauce and let it wilt a little more before serving.

Sticky Garlic Ginger Meatballs with Cranberry Plum Sauce

Serves 6

Fragrant and sticky, these meatballs always disappear fast. The panko crumbs keep them light, and the garlic, ginger, and scallions add lots of flavour. The sauce in this recipe is a lovely homemade take on store-bought plum sauce and a great way to use up fruit you froze (or canned) earlier in the year.

Meatballs

1½ lb (750 g) lean ground beef
2 eggs
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 cup (250 ml) panko breadcrumbs
1 cup (250 ml) slivered scallions, plus extra for garnish
1½ tsp (7.5 ml) grated ginger
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper

Sauce

1 tsp (5 ml) vegetable oil 1 clove garlic, minced
1½ cups (750 ml) diced plums (frozen and thawed, fresh or canned all work well)
½ cup (125 ml) fresh or frozen cranberries
½ cup (125 ml) chicken stock
¼ cup (60 ml) honey
3 Tbsp (45 ml) rice vinegar
1 Tbsp (15 ml) soy sauce
½ tsp (2.5 ml) sriracha sauce

Make the meatballs

- Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Grease or line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- In a large bowl, use your hands to mix together the beef, eggs, garlic, breadcrumbs, scallions, ginger, salt, and pepper. Form the mixture into meatballs that are about 2 scant tablespoons (about 25 ml) each and arrange them evenly on the prepared baking sheet.
- Bake until browned on top and cooked through, about 25 minutes.

Make the sauce

- Meanwhile, warm the oil in a small saucepan over medium-low heat and add the garlic. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Mix in the

plums, cranberries, stock, honey, rice vinegar, soy sauce, and sriracha. Stir well and then increase the heat to medium-high. Bring the sauce to a boil, stirring occasionally, until the sauce thickens and reduces a little, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and use an immersion blender to purée it to your desired consistency. It can be anywhere from completely smooth to very chunky.

Assemble the dish

- Remove the meatballs from the oven, pour one-third of the sauce over them, tossing to coat, then place the meatballs back in the oven for 5 minutes.
- Serve the meatballs with rice and spinach and place a bowl of extra sauce on the table with a spoon for guests to add more if they like.

Cook’s notes

This makes enough sauce for two batches of meatballs. Extra sauce can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week or in the freezer for up to 6 months.

Cranberry Cumin Rice

Serves 6

This sweet and savoury rice gets a little extra texture from the toasted cumin and slivered scallions. I’ve used dehydrated cranberries from the summer here, but fresh or frozen also work well.

2 tsp (10 ml) cumin seeds
2 Tbsp (30 ml) unsalted butter
2 Tbsp (30 ml) finely diced shallot
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper
3 cups (750 ml) jasmine rice
1 cup (250 ml) dried cranberries
6 cups (1.5 L) low-sodium chicken stock
1 cup (250 ml) slivered scallions

- Set a large saucepan over medium heat and add the cumin seeds. Shaking the pan frequently, toast the seeds until they’re fragrant and just starting to darken. Add the butter, shallots, salt, and pepper and cook until the shallots are translucent, 2–3 minutes.
- Add the rice, cranberries, and stock. Stir, cover, and bring to a boil, then turn the heat to low and cook until the rice is cooked through, about 18–20 minutes.
- Turn off the heat and stir in the scallions while fluffing the rice. Set the lid on slightly ajar for 5 minutes to let the steam out, then serve.

Rosemary Pear Sorbet

Makes 4 cups (1 L)

Have you ever tasted something and then obsessed over it for years? That’s what I did after I tasted this pear sorbet for the first time. After an incredible meal at a French restaurant, I was served this ethereal sorbet with the purest pear flavour. It was the perfect ending to a memorable dinner. Bosc or Bartlett pears are ideal for this recipe. I’ve added rosemary to my version, but otherwise I’ve stayed true to the original. It’s a simple dessert to be sure, but after a hearty meal, it’s the perfect thing to keep you and your guests awake. Make sure you put the bowl of your ice-cream maker in the freezer at least 4 hours before you plan to make this.

3 medium or 4 small ripe pears
2 Tbsp (30 ml) lemon juice
2 cups (500 ml) water
1 cup (250 ml) granulated sugar
1 large sprig of rosemary

- Place the water in a medium saucepan over high heat. Add the sugar and rosemary and bring to a boil for 1 minute. There’s no need to stir at this point. Remove the syrup from the heat and let it steep until it comes to room temperature.
- While the syrup is cooling, peel and core the pears, then place them in a high-powered blender or a food processor fitted with a steel blade and process until smooth. You should have about 2 cups (500 ml). If not, purée another pear. A little more is better than not quite enough. Stir the lemon juice into the puréed pears to keep them from turning brown, then set aside.
- Strain the rosemary from the simple syrup, pour the syrup into the pears, and stir to combine everything.
- Start your ice-cream maker, pour the mixture into the frozen bowl, and let it churn for about 20 minutes or until the mixture is frozen and thick. Serve right away or store in an airtight container in the freezer until you’re ready to serve it, up to 3 months.

Cook’s notes

No rosemary? Omit it or substitute lavender for an elegant variation.

No ice-cream maker? You can freeze the mixture in a 9- × 13-inch (23 × 33 cm) baking pan for 45 minutes, then scrape and stir it up, return it to the freezer, and repeat the process a few more times at 30-minute intervals for a total of 2½–3 hours. Once finished, cover it with a lid or plastic wrap until using.

Green Tea with Lavender-Infused Honey

Serves 6

Grassy, vegetal, and slightly nutty green tea is sweetened with homemade lavender-infused honey for a little twist on an after-dinner tea.

Lavender honey

½ cup (125 ml) honey
2 Tbsp (30 ml) lavender buds or greens

Green tea

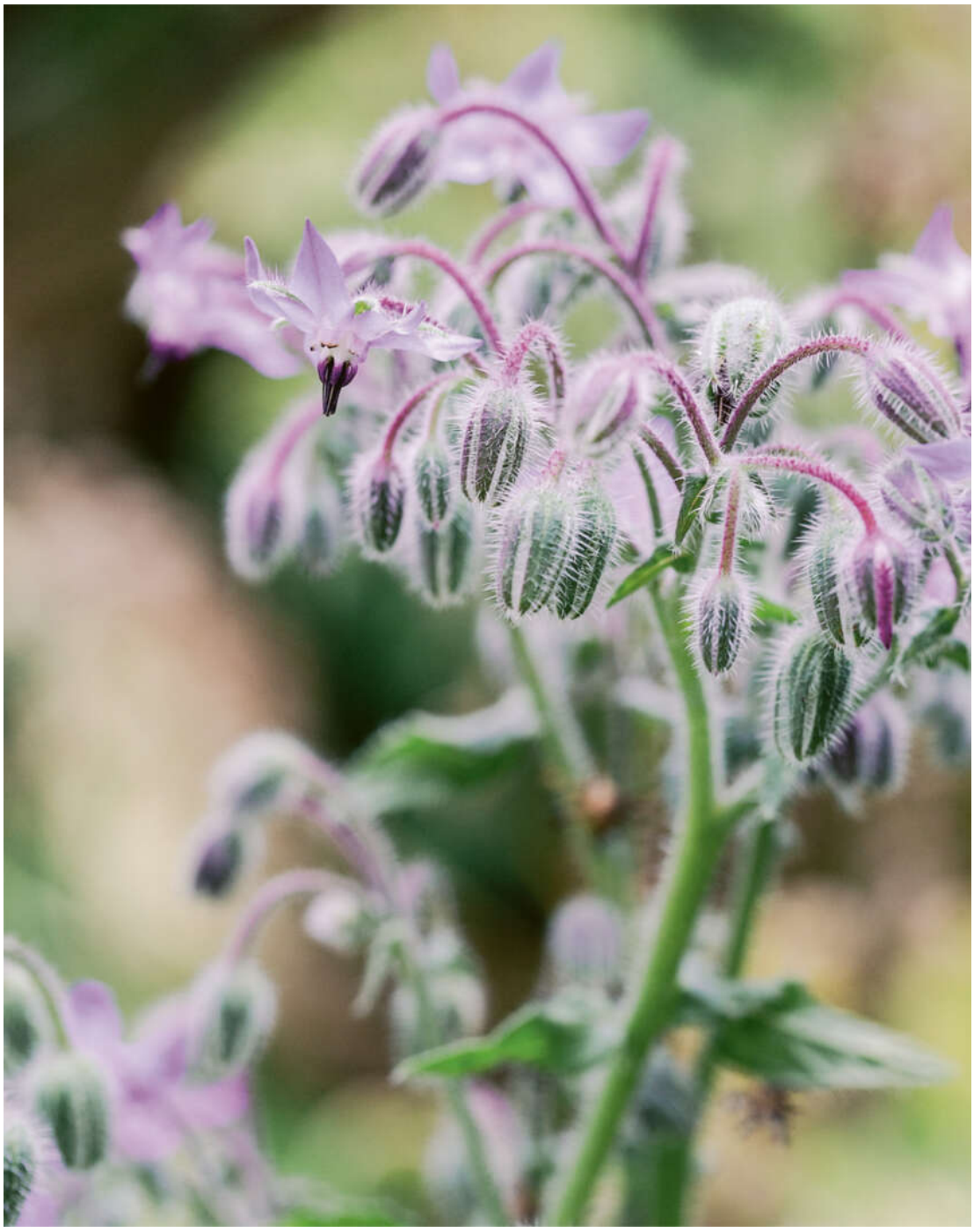
6 cups (1.5 L) water
2 Tbsp (30 ml) loose-leaf green tea or 6 green tea bags

Make the lavender honey

- Place the honey and lavender in a small saucepan over medium heat. Stir and bring to a simmer for 2 minutes, then remove from the heat and let it steep until it cools to room temperature. Strain the lavender out of the honey and place the honey in a small dish with a spoon.

Make the tea

- Bring the water to a boil, then let it cool for about 2 minutes. Place the tea in a teapot, pour the hot water over top, and let it steep until it is as strong as you like, about 2–3 minutes. (Don’t steep too long, as it can get bitter.)
- Pour the tea through a strainer to remove the tea leaves or lift the tea bags out and then serve the tea immediately with the lavender honey on the side.



Menu Nineteen Winter Celebration

SERVES 6

Crab Fritters with Spicy Lemon Wasabi Dip

Slivered Winter Vegetables with Apple Ginger Dressing

West Coast Seafood Stew with Saffron Aioli

Cranberry Sour Cream Bundt Cake

Negroni Sbagliato

Bright fruity flavours light up winter in this luxurious menu. Start with an orange-scented cocktail that hints at the orange, fennel, and tomato seafood stew to come. Indulge in crispy crab fritters and refresh your palate with an elegant presentation of shaved winter vegetables. The finale, a stunning cranberry orange cake, looks impressive but is very easy to make. I love to serve this on Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve. Pick up a loaf of your favourite bread or make the no-knead bread on page 57 to serve with the stew.

Crab Fritters with Spicy Lemon Wasabi Dip

Makes about 12

These sweet and savoury crab fritters are similar to crab cakes and whenever they’re on the menu, they disappear fast!

Wasabi mayonnaise

1 cup (250 ml) Japanese Kewpie mayonnaise
1 Tbsp (15 ml) wasabi paste or freshly grated wasabi

1 tsp (5 ml) grated lemon zest
1 Tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice

Crab fritters

1 egg
⅓ cup (80 ml) milk
⅓ cup (80 ml) cornstarch
⅓ cup (80 ml) all-purpose flour 1 tsp (5 ml) baking powder
1 tsp (5 ml) Old Bay spice ½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground black pepper
½ cup (125 ml) fresh or thawed frozen corn kernels
¼ cup (60 ml) finely diced red bell pepper
¼ cup (60 ml) thinly sliced scallions
1 cup (250 ml) fresh crabmeat (about ½ lb/250 g)
Vegetable oil, for deep-frying
Shichimi togarashi seasoning (optional)

Make the wasabi mayonnaise

- Place the mayonnaise in a small bowl. Slowly whisk in the wasabi paste, lemon zest, and lemon juice until the mixture is smooth. Set aside.

Make the fritters

- In a medium-sized bowl, beat the egg and milk until well blended.
- In a separate bowl, whisk the cornstarch, flour, baking powder, Old Bay spice, salt, and pepper. Add this to the egg mixture and gently fold the ingredients together. Do not overmix. Add the corn, bell peppers, and scallions, stir to mix, and then gently fold in the crabmeat.
- Fill a high-sided frying pan (or deep fryer) with 1–2 inches (2.5–5 cm) of vegetable oil. Place it on the stove over medium heat and bring the temperature to 350°F (180°C). Check the

temperature with a thermometer, or spoon a drop of batter into the oil; if it sizzles right away, it’s hot enough.

- Line a wire cooling rack with paper towel and sit it over a rimmed baking sheet.
- Spoon heaping tablespoons (about 20–25 ml) of crab batter into the hot oil, being very careful to prevent splattering. Leave about 1 inch (2.5 cm) of space between each fritter to prevent them from sticking together as they cook and expand. Once golden on one side, about 3–4 minutes, flip them over and fry until golden on the other side, another 2 minutes.
- Using a slotted spoon, remove the fritters to the prepared rack and sprinkle lightly with shichimi, if using. Let the oil come back to temperature and repeat with the remaining batter. Serve hot with the wasabi mayonnaise on the side.

Slivered Winter Vegetables with Apple Ginger Dressing

Serves 6

I love how delicate hearty winter vegetables look when they’re thinly sliced. A mandoline will make short work of the slicing in this recipe, but if you don’t have one, just use a sharp chef’s knife and slice as thinly as you can. The dressing is thick, but its apple purée base means it’s also refreshing.

Dressing

1 medium apple, peeled and cored ¼ cup (60 ml) sweet white onion
½ inch (1.25 cm) ginger, thinly sliced 1 Tbsp (15 ml) rice wine vinegar
1 Tbsp (15 ml) miso paste ½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) finely ground black pepper
2 Tbsp (30 ml) vegetable oil

Salad

¾ cup (185 ml) cauliflower
¾ cup (185 ml) daikon or radish
¾ cup (185 ml) fennel
¾ cup (185 ml) Brussels sprouts

Make the dressing

- In a food processor fitted with a steel blade or in a high-powered blender, blend the apple, onion, ginger, vinegar, and miso paste until it’s fairly smooth, scraping down the sides as needed. (A few lumps are okay.) Add the salt, pepper, and oil and blend again until the oil is well incorporated, about 30 seconds.

Make the salad

- Finely slice the salad vegetables and arrange them on a platter. Spoon the dressing over, let sit for 5–10 minutes to lightly marinate the vegetables, and then serve.

West Coast Seafood Stew with Saffron Aioli

Serves 6

This stew (technically a soup because of its faster cooking time) is seriously fragrant, flavoured with anise seed, fennel, saffron, and orange, and the piquant aioli adds a bright flavour contrast to dip your seafood into. Be sure to serve it with your favourite boule to soak up every last bit! I love a combination of crab, shellfish, and

finfish, but change it up depending on what's fresh and what you enjoy eating. Add them to the stew in order of cooking time, as I've done here.

Stew

1 Tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
½ lb (250 g) mild Italian sausage
1 cup (250 ml) diced yellow onion 1 tsp (5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper 3 cloves garlic, minced
2 tsp (10 ml) anise seed
¼ tsp (1 ml) red pepper flakes
Large pinch of saffron
2 bulbs fennel, green tops reserved for garnish and bulbs roughly chopped
1 cup (250 ml) diced carrot
2 cups (500 ml) dry, unoaked white wine
1 cup (250 ml) diced canned tomatoes with their juice
1 orange, zest and juice
4 cups (1 L) seafood stock or chicken stock
1 Dungeness crab, cleaned and broken into 6 (4 × 2-leg pieces and 2 claw pieces)
2 lb (1 kg) clams, rinsed
2 lb (1 kg) mussels, rinsed and debearded
1 lb (500 g) skinless, boneless cod, cut into bite-sized cubes
1 cup (250 ml) flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped
Bread, for serving

Saffron aioli

1 clove garlic, minced
¼ tsp (1 ml) kosher salt 1 anchovy fillet
⅔ cup (160 ml) good-quality mayonnaise
Pinch of saffron
1 tsp (5 ml) lemon juice ¼ tsp (1 ml) hot sauce

Make the stew

- Warm the oil in a large, wide soup pot over medium heat. Chop or crumble the sausage meat into the pot and fry, stirring occasionally, until cooked through, about 5 minutes. Add the onion, salt, and pepper and cook, stirring frequently, until the onion is translucent. Add the garlic, anise seeds, red pepper

flakes, and saffron. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Stir in the fennel and carrots and cook until they start to soften, about 3 more minutes.

- Pour in the wine and let it come to a gentle boil for about 4 minutes to evaporate the alcohol. Add the tomatoes, orange zest and juice, and stock, and stir to combine. Increase the heat to high. When the stock comes to a boil, add the crab pieces and cover the pot. Cook for 5 minutes, then remove the lid and add the clams and mussels. Replace the lid and cook until all the shellfish have opened, about 4–5 minutes. Discard any that haven't opened, then stir in the cod. Place the lid back on the pot and turn the heat off. Let the residual heat cook the fish until opaque, about 3–4 minutes, then stir in the parsley and season to taste with extra salt and pepper if needed.

Make the aioli

- Place the garlic, salt, and anchovy in a small bowl and use the back of a spoon to mash them together. Add the mayonnaise and saffron and stir it all together. Stir in the lemon juice and hot sauce, cover, and refrigerate until you're ready to use it. Give it another stir right before serving.

To serve

- Ladle the stew into bowls, making sure everyone gets pieces of all types of seafood and the sausage and garnish with the green fennel fronds. Serve with bread and aioli on the side.

Cranberry Sour Cream Bundt Cake

Makes 1 (12-cup/3 L) Bundt cake

Tender and moist, tart and sweet, this is a festive-looking cake that’s perfect for winter holidays. It’s also quick and easy to make. Go simple with just the glaze or decorate it with evergreen garden herbs, sugared cranberries, and small wedges of orange.

Cake

2¾ cups (685 ml) all-purpose flour
1 tsp (5 ml) baking powder
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
¾ cup (185 ml) unsalted butter, softened
¾ cup (185 ml) packed brown sugar
¾ cup (185 ml) granulated sugar
3 eggs
½ tsp (2.5 ml) vanilla extract
2 tsp (10 ml) grated orange zest
1 cup (250 ml) full-fat or light sour cream
½ cup (125 ml) whole milk
2 cups (500 ml) fresh or frozen cranberries

Icing

1 cup (250 ml) icing sugar
2 Tbsp (30 ml) orange juice
1 Tbsp (15 ml) unsalted butter, softened
Evergreen herb sprigs, sugared cranberries, and small orange wedges, for garnish (optional)

Make the cake

- Preheat the oven to 325°F (160°C). Grease and flour a 12-cup (3 L) Bundt pan.
- In a small mixing bowl, mix together the flour, baking powder, and salt, and set aside.
- In a large bowl, cream the butter and both sugars together at medium speed until the mixture is light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs, vanilla, and orange zest until mixed, then beat in the sour cream to combine.

- Beat in half the flour mixture, then add the milk and beat until incorporated. Add the remaining flour and beat until smooth. Fold in the cranberries. If you're using frozen cranberries, dust them with a small amount of flour before folding in.
- Spoon the batter into the Bundt pan and smooth the top with the back of a spoon. Bake until a toothpick inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean, about 1 hour and 20 minutes.
- Remove the cake from the oven and let it cool in the pan for 10 minutes before turning it onto a wire rack to cool completely.

Make the icing

- When the cake is cool, whisk the icing sugar with the orange juice and butter in a small bowl. You want the icing to be thick but pourable so that it drips down the sides of the cake a bit but doesn't run off the top. Add a bit more icing sugar or juice as needed to reach the desired consistency and then drizzle it over the cake. Arrange the garnishes, if using, immediately after icing the cake to help them adhere.

Cook's notes

If you're using frozen cranberries, don't let them thaw before you mix them into the batter. Otherwise, they can burst and bleed juice into your batter and make it too thin. Frozen cranberries will make your batter feel slightly stiffer, but it will bake up just the same.

Negroni Sbagliato

Serves 6

The negroni sbagliato uses sparkling wine instead of gin, making it a lighter twist on the classic negroni. Bright, bubbly, and bittersweet, it’s perfect for an easy-drinking aperitif and ties together the orange in the main course and the dessert. You can serve these in old-fashioned glasses or in coupes as I’ve done here. Chill the glasses for at least 20 minutes before you plan to make the cocktails.

6 oz (185 ml) Campari
6 oz (185 ml) sweet (rosso) vermouth
¾ cup (185 ml) dry sparkling wine
Ice cubes
6 thin orange wheels or twists, for garnish

- Fill a large mixing glass or pitcher two-thirds full of ice. Pour in the Campari and vermouth and stir until cold, about 30 seconds. Place an ice cube in each glass, then strain the spirits equally into each glass and top with 2 tablespoons (30 ml) of sparkling wine. Give each drink one gentle stir, top with the orange garnish, and serve immediately.

Menu Twenty Snow Moon Supper

SERVES 4

- Scallops Motoyaki
- Simplest Winter Salad
- Chicken and Parsnip Stew
- Chocolate Beetroot Cake
- Grapefruit Rosemary Spritz

Rich and hearty flavours define this menu. Start with a tart and herbaceous zero-proof drink and rich, creamy Japanese-style baked scallops. Thick chicken stew flavoured with leeks and parsnips pairs well with a simple crisp salad. Finish with a cozy winter garden–inspired chocolate cake. Herbed cheese biscuits (page 43) or cornbread (page 265) would also be delicious with the stew.

Scallops Motoyaki

Serves 4

Motoyaki means baked with mayonnaise, and oysters motoyaki have been one of the most popular recipes on my website for a few years now. In this version, I've smothered scallops with an incredibly moreish sauce before broiling with a topper of grated cheese. If you want to make them dairy-free, omit the cheese. They will still broil to a beautiful golden brown.

½ cup (125 ml) Japanese Kewpie mayonnaise
2 Tbsp (30 ml) shiro miso paste
1 Tbsp (15 ml) mirin
1 Tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice 5 dashes hot sauce
2 cups (500 ml) fresh spinach, shredded or cut into a chiffonade
12 large scallops
½ cup (125 ml) shredded medium cheddar cheese
Lemon wedges and chopped parsley, for garnish

- Preheat the broiler to high and set your oven rack at medium height.
- Place four ramekins on a baking sheet.
- In a small bowl, mix the mayonnaise with the miso paste. Add the mirin, lemon juice, and hot sauce and mix well.
- Divide the spinach equally between the ramekins and then top with three scallops per ramekin.
- Spoon about 1 tablespoon (15 ml) of the miso sauce over each scallop and then sprinkle a small amount of cheese over top.
- Slide the ramekins under the broiler and cook until the scallops are bubbling, getting brown spots, and just cooked through, about 5–8 minutes depending on the height of your oven rack and the temperature of your broiler.
- Remove from the oven and let cool for 3–5 minutes before serving. Garnish with extra lemon wedges and a sprinkling of parsley.

Cook’s notes

If you shuck your own scallops or have some large scallop shells, you can use them instead of the ramekins to bake the scallops in. Place the cleaned shells on a bed of coarse kosher salt to help them stay upright in the pan, then layer in the spinach, scallops, miso sauce, and cheese and broil as per the recipe.

Simplest Winter Salad

Serves 4

This salad uses my go-to, basic vinaigrette. It’s based on a French classic and it’s great anytime you want a salad that refreshes the palate and doesn’t detract from the main course. In this recipe I toss it with my hearty wild Italian arugula, but you can use any hearty green that you grow in the winter.

5 Tbsp (75 ml) olive oil
1 Tbsp (15 ml) red wine vinegar
2 tsp (10 ml) Dijon mustard
1 Tbsp (15 ml) minced shallot
1 tsp (5 ml) chopped rosemary or thyme
1 Tbsp (15 ml) chopped flat-leaf parsley
¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground black pepper
8 cups (2 L) arugula or other winter greens

- Place the oil, vinegar, mustard, shallots, mixed herbs, salt, and pepper in an airtight jar and shake until emulsified.
- Place the greens in a large bowl, drizzle the dressing over, and toss to coat.

Chicken and Parsnip Stew

Serves 4

At first glance, the ingredient list looks long but it’s really just pantry staples and herbs. Everything goes in the pot to simmer together, so it’s a really easy recipe.

2 Tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
4 bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs
1 cup (250 ml) diced celery
1 cup (250 ml) sliced carrot
3 cloves garlic, crushed
¼ cup (60 ml) all-purpose flour
4 cups (1 L) chicken stock
2 cups (500 ml) sliced leeks
2 cups (500 ml) round slices of parsnips
2 cups (500 ml) peeled, diced russet potatoes
1 Tbsp (15 ml) grainy mustard
½ tsp (2.5 ml) dried oregano
½ tsp (2.5 ml) dried rosemary
½ tsp (2.5 ml) dried thyme
½ cup (125 ml) whipping cream
Salt and ground black pepper
Fresh herbs and bacon bits, for garnish (optional)

- Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C).
- Place the oil in a large Dutch oven and turn the heat to medium-high. Once the oil is hot, add the chicken, skin side down, and sear until browned. Flip and brown the other side, about 10–12 minutes in total.
- Turn the heat down to medium and add the celery, carrots, and garlic. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the veggies are translucent and just starting to get some brown bits, about 5–7 minutes.
- Stir in the flour and let it cook for 2 minutes, stirring frequently.
- Whisk in the stock until the flour has dissolved, then add the leeks, parsnips, potatoes, mustard, oregano, rosemary, and thyme.

- Bring the stew to a gentle boil, then place the pot in the oven, uncovered. Bake until cooked through and browned on top, about 45 minutes.
- Remove the stew from the oven, stir in the cream, and season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve hot, topped with fresh chopped herbs from your garden or some bacon bits, if using.

Chocolate Beetroot Cake

Makes 1 two-layer (9-inch/23 cm) cake

This tasty cake is my winter version of a chocolate zucchini cake but with red beets for a natural red velvet cake!

Cake

2¾ cups (685 ml) all-purpose flour
½ cup (125 ml) cocoa powder
1 Tbsp (15 ml) baking powder
1 tsp (5 ml) baking soda
½ tsp (2.5 ml) fine salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground cinnamon
½ cup (125 ml) butter, softened
2 cups (500 ml) granulated sugar
4 large eggs, at room temperature
1 Tbsp (15 ml) vanilla extract
1 tsp (5 ml) white vinegar
2 cups (500 ml) grated beets
1 cup (250 ml) buttermilk, at room temperature

Icing

1 cup (250 ml) cream cheese, softened, cubed
¼ cup (60 ml) softened butter
1 Tbsp (15 ml) vanilla extract
¼ tsp (1 ml) fine salt
2 cups (500 ml) icing sugar

Make the cake

- Place the oven rack at the middle position and preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Grease and flour the bottom and sides of two 9-inch (23 cm) round baking pans.
- In a medium bowl, mix together the flour, cocoa, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon.
- In a separate bowl, use an electric mixer to beat the butter with the sugar on medium-high speed until creamy, about 1 minute, scraping down the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula as needed. Add the eggs, vanilla, and vinegar and beat on high speed for 2 minutes to fully combine, scraping down the bowl as needed. Add the grated beets and mix until combined.

- Add half the dry ingredients, followed by the buttermilk, and then the remaining dry ingredients, mixing well on low speed between additions.
- Divide the batter equally between the two cake pans. Bake both on the middle rack, rotating them halfway through baking time, until the top of each cake springs back when gently touched and a toothpick inserted in the centre of one comes out clean, about 30–35 minutes.
- Place the cake pans on a wire rack and let the cakes cool in the pan for 15 minutes before removing from the pans to cool completely.

Make the icing and assemble the cake

- In a medium bowl, use electric beaters to beat the cream cheese, butter, vanilla, and salt together until creamy. Add the icing sugar in three additions, beating just until smooth between additions. Don’t overmix or it will be too runny to stay on the cake properly.
- To assemble, place one cake on a cake stand or serving plate. Spoon one-third of the icing onto the cake and use an offset spatula or the back of a spoon to spread it evenly. Top with the second cake and spread the remaining icing all over the top and sides. Place the finished cake in the refrigerator for 30–60 minutes before slicing.

Cook’s notes

For the best results, bring all cold ingredients like buttermilk, butter, and eggs to room temperature before you start.

Grapefruit Rosemary Spritz

Serves 4

I love a good spritz, and this one is filled with winter citrus and evergreen rosemary. Grapefruit is just pleasantly bitter enough to temper the sweetness of the rosemary syrup, and the club soda keeps it refreshing. Make the rosemary syrup ahead of time so it can cool and be chilled before using.

Rosemary syrup

¾ cup (185 ml) water
¾ cup (185 ml) granulated sugar
4 big sprigs of rosemary

Spritz

1 cup (250 ml) grapefruit juice
¾ cup (185 ml) rosemary simple syrup
½ cup (125 ml) lime juice
¼ tsp (1 ml) fine sea salt
2 cups (500 ml) club soda
Sprigs of rosemary or grapefruit wheels, for garnish

Make the syrup

- Place the water, sugar, and rosemary in a small saucepan and bring it to a boil, without stirring, over high heat. Let it boil for 3 minutes, then remove from the heat and let it steep until cool. Strain into a small jar and place in the refrigerator, uncovered, to chill.

Make the spritz

- Fill a small pitcher two-thirds full with cubed ice. Add the grapefruit juice, rosemary syrup, lime juice, and salt and stir vigorously until well mixed and chilled.
- Fill four highball glasses with ice. Strain the spritz equally into each glass and top each with ½ cup (125 ml) of club soda. Garnish with a sprig of rosemary or a wheel of grapefruit and serve immediately.

PRESERVING THE GARDEN

Anyone who grows their own food is familiar with the problem of producing much more than they can eat when their fruit or vegetables are ripe. One way to avoid wasting this produce is to preserve it to enjoy all year-round. If you have grown more than you can use or preserve, invite your friends and neighbours to take some.

Preserving takes many forms, so don’t write it off if the thought of big batches and time-consuming preparation is not appealing. There are a multitude of ways to process and store your homegrown bounty that are quick, not too messy, and easy to do in small amounts. Canning, freezing, drying, curing, pickling, fermenting, juicing, and smoking can all be done in small batches.

This chapter contains a few of my favourite preserving methods to help you preserve your harvest to use throughout the year.

DRYING
Dried Herbs
Dry Herb Blends
Dry Wild Mushrooms

Dry Apple Rings

FERMENTING
Fermented Carrots
Fermented Rainbow Slaw
Fermented Garlic Honey

FREEZING
Freezer Tomato Sauce
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JAMMING
Apricot Thyme Jam
Fig Balsamic Jam
Classic Blackberry Jam

PICKLING
Garlic Sesame Pickled Mushrooms
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Pickled Rhubarb
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MUSTARD, VINEGAR, SALT + SUGAR
Grainy Beer Mustard
Summer Berry Vinegar
Herbed Salt and Sugar
ROSEMARY THYME SALT
LAVENDER SUGAR
FIR TIP SUGAR

Drying

[Dried Herbs]

Dry Herb Blends

Dry Wild Mushrooms

Dry Apple Rings

Drying is a versatile technique. You can dry whole herbs, dry thinly sliced apples and pears to eat as snacks, or make fruit leather out of softer fruits like peaches and strawberries. You can also dry slivered or diced vegetables like carrots, beets, onions, and celery to use in soups, stews, and even dip mixes.

Simply spread your ingredients in a single layer on a baking sheet in an oven set to the lowest setting, or use a dehydrator if you have one. Both options work well, although a dehydrator is more convenient. While you may lose some fresh flavour, drying saves on storage space, as dehydrating drastically shrinks produce.

Make sure your product is completely dry before you transfer it to containers, so it doesn't go mouldy. Break a sample ingredient apart to see if it snaps or crumbles. If so, it is nice and dry and ready to store. If it's still pliable and bendy, let it dry for longer.

Store dried herbs, fruit, and vegetables in airtight containers or bags or vacuum seal them. If you're storing them for a long time, keep them in a cool, dark place like a pantry.

Once you try your own homegrown and ground herbs, you may never go back to store-bought.

Dried Herbs

Makes about 2 cups (500 ml)

Dry each type of herb in its own batch so that the drying time is consistent. Using low temperatures for drying helps the herbs retain their colour, flavour, and aroma, so refrain from turning the heat up higher to dry them faster.

4 cups (1 L) fresh herbs, cleaned and dried

- If you’re using a dehydrator, set the temperature to 95°F (35°C) for delicate herbs like basil, cilantro, dill, oregano, and parsley, and to 110°F (43°C) for sturdier ones like lavender, rosemary, sage, and thyme. Arrange the herbs in a single layer on the trays, leaving space for airflow. Drying time will vary anywhere from 1–2 hours for thin, dry herbs to 4–6 hours for thicker herbs with more water content.
- If you’re using an oven, set it to the lowest temperature (usually around 150°F/65°C or the “Warm” setting) and prop the door open slightly to let moisture escape and lower the heat a little. Spread the herbs on a parchment-lined baking sheet and check them every 30 minutes; thin leaves can dry in 1–2 hours, and thicker ones may take up to 4 hours.
- Herbs are ready when they crumble easily between your fingers. Let them cool completely before storing. Strip the leaves from the stems of woody herbs (if needed), then keep them whole or crumble them slightly. Store your dried herbs in clean, airtight jars, labelled clearly with the name and date. For the best flavour, keep the jars in a cool, dark place for up to 6 months. Don’t crush the herbs until you’re ready to use them.

Cook’s notes

Garlic can be dried this way too. Peel garlic cloves and slice as thinly as possible. Dry at 95°F (35°C) until crisp. Once dry, store in airtight glass jars as is, or grind them up into powder before storing.

Dry Herb Blends

Each blend makes 1 cup (250 ml)

Once you have individual dried herbs, mix some up into convenient herb blends for your favourite meals. You can start with the three blends I list here, but get creative with your favourites. These make lovely gifts at Christmas if you put them in ¼-cup (60 ml) jars with a cute label.

Herbes de Provence

- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) dried oregano
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) dried thyme
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) dried savory
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) dried tarragon
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) dried basil
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) dried marjoram
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) dried parsley or chervil
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) dried anise seed
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) dried lavender buds

Italian Seasoning

- ¼ cup (60 ml) dried oregano
- 3 Tbsp (45 ml) dried basil
- 3 Tbsp (45 ml) dried thyme
- 3 Tbsp (45 ml) dried marjoram
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) dried parsley
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) dried rosemary

Ranch Seasoning

- ½ cup (125 ml) dried parsley
- 3 Tbsp (45 ml) dried dill
- 3 Tbsp (45 ml) dried chives
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) garlic powder (store-bought is fine)
- 1 tsp (5 ml) dried basil
- 1 tsp (5 ml) finely ground pepper

- Place all the herbs for your chosen herb blend in a medium-sized bowl. Stir them together well, then spoon them into small glass jars, using a funnel if you like. Top them with lids and label them. Store in a cool, dry, dark place for up to 6 months.

Dry Wild Mushrooms

Makes about 2 cups (500 ml)

Dried mushrooms are a really handy staple to have in the pantry and are just as easy to make in an oven as in a dehydrator. Properly (read fully) dried mushrooms in an airtight container will keep well for a year or longer and they rehydrate really well. I like to leave some in slices and grind some into a delicious powder. The final yield will vary depending on how wet your mushrooms are. During periods of heavy rain, mushrooms will have a lot of shrinkage, while dry-weather mushrooms won't shrink as much.

4 cups (1 L) wild mushrooms, cleaned and trimmed of any spoiled parts

- Cut your mushrooms into ¼-inch (0.5 cm) slices.
- If you're using a dehydrator, load them in a single layer on the racks, and dehydrate at 145°F (63°C) until they are leathery and dry, usually around 4–6 hours. I like to let them sit overnight and run the dehydrator one more time until they feel crispy.
- If you're using an oven, preheat it to its lowest temperature, around 150°F (65°C). Place the mushrooms on wire racks set over baking sheets, then slide them into the oven. Prop the door open just a little with a wooden spoon to let moisture escape as they dry. Once you think they are dry—it usually takes about 4–6 hours—let them cool and check if they are crisp. If not, place them back in the warm oven and dry them for longer before testing again.
- Once the mushrooms are fully cooled, dry, and crisp, you can store them in airtight containers in a cool, dry place for up to a year.

Cook’s notes

To make mushroom powder, place as many dried mushrooms as you like in a food processor fitted with a steel blade and pulse until you have a fine powder. Store the powder in an airtight jar. Mushroom powder is my secret ingredient in gravy, soup, stews, and sauces. It adds rich, earthy flavour and lots of umami. Just add 1–2 teaspoons (5–10 ml) into your sauce, stew, or risotto and let it cook in for at least 10 minutes, but longer is fine too.

Dry Apple Rings

Makes about 4 cups (1 L)

I've written this for just a few apples but if you have helping hands and a lot of apples, make lots and stock up for winter! These are great road trip snacks that won't leave crumbs in your car.

6 apples
3 cups (750 ml) water
¼ cup (60 ml) lemon juice
Ground cinnamon, for sprinkling (optional)

- Wash, dry, and core the apples. (Peeling is optional. Leave the peels on for extra fibre but discard them if you don't like them.)
- Using a sharp knife or mandoline, cut the apples into thin, even slices (about ¼ inch/0.5 cm thick).
- In a medium bowl, mix together the water and lemon juice. Add the apple slices as you go to keep them from browning too much. Once you're finished slicing and soaking the apples, drain them and pat them dry with a clean tea towel.
- If you're using a dehydrator, load them in a single layer on the racks, sprinkle with cinnamon if using, and dehydrate at medium heat until they are leathery and dry, about 6 hours.
- If you're using an oven, preheat it to its lowest temperature, around 150°F (65°C). Place the slices on wire racks set over baking sheets, lightly sprinkle with cinnamon, if using, then slide them into the oven. Prop the door open just a little with a wooden spoon to let moisture escape as they dry. The humidity level, apple type, and thickness of the slices will all affect the drying time, so allow 5–8 hours. Start checking them at the 5-hour point and keep an eye on them.

- When done, the slices should be dry and leathery, not sticky. Let them cool for a few hours, then store them in an airtight container in a cool, dark place. These will keep for 3–4 months. If you’re not sure they’re dry enough, store them in the freezer instead for up to 6 months.

Fermenting

Fermented Carrots

Fermented Rainbow Slaw

Fermented Garlic Honey

Fermenting is a surprisingly simple process that is seeing a resurgence in popularity. The result is a distinctly tart and complex flavour full of healthy probiotic bacteria that are great for gut health. Fruits and vegetables naturally contain the right bacteria (lactobacillus) to do this job with little intervention from you, creating a naturally pickled flavour.

You may feel concerned about spoilage when doing it yourself for the first time, but this traditional method is safer than most people realize. The recipes I've included here are really versatile. The brine I use for the carrots can be used for most vegetables, so get creative. Some of my favourites are radishes, cabbage, and small cucumbers. I don't recommend asparagus as the texture suffers and the flavour gets unpleasantly strong.

The rainbow slaw is just a version of sauerkraut. Many cultures around the world have their own version—Korean kimchi and Mexican escabeche, for example—but the basic idea is the same.

Garlic in honey is its own unique process but well worth trying if you grow lots of garlic. Honey is a natural preservative and works well to ferment other garden produce too, like cranberries, strawberries, jalapeños, or foraged elderberries.

It is important to start with properly sterilized jars and lids. Simply run them through your dishwasher with a hot drying setting or place them in a pot of boiling water for 5 minutes before draining and using. A 4-cup (1 L) wide-mouth mason jar or larger jar with a similar-sized opening will help keep your ingredients immersed in the brine.

Once you've filled your jars, you need to make sure the fruit or vegetables stay submerged. If you don't have a fermenting weight,

fill a small plastic bag with about ½ cup (125 ml) of water, seal, and put it on top of the vegetables to weigh them down.

Cover your ferment. Using some type of lid helps ensure no foreign bacteria gets in while the fermenting is happening. Airlock lids are nice, but if you're just starting out, a paper towel held in place with an elastic works just fine. Store your jars out of direct sunlight in a spot that is room temperature or slightly cooler during the fermenting process. Once they have fermented to your liking, place a regular lid on the jar and store in your refrigerator or other cold storage spot to halt the fermenting.

If you end up with mould or a bad smell that is not like vinegar and veggies—this is unlikely if you follow all the instructions exactly—toss out your ferment and start again with fresh sterilized jars and vegetables.

Fermented Carrots

Makes 2 (4-cup/1 L) jars

Tangy and flavourful, these fermented carrots make a great snack pickle. Try using radishes in place of the carrots. They're divine on top of tacos, burgers, or huevos rancheros or on a sandwich. As vegetables ferment, the gases that are produced need to be released. There are jar toppers made just for this purpose called airlock lids and pickle pipes that allow gases to escape but prevent germs or dirt from getting in. They are convenient, but you can improvise safely by placing a clean kitchen towel or paper towel on the jar and securing it with an elastic band. This recipe multiplies (and divides in half) easily, so make as many (or as few) jars at a time as you like.

6 cups (1.5 L) filtered water or water that's been boiled for 20 minutes and cooled to remove chlorine if you have city water
3 Tbsp (45 ml) kosher salt
2 Tbsp (30 ml) peppercorns, divided
1 tsp (5 ml) red pepper flakes (optional), divided
6 cups (1.5 L) carrot sticks cut a generous inch (2.5 cm) shorter than the top of your jar, divided

- Sterilize two (4-cup/1 L) jars (see page 339).
- In a large bowl, mix the water with the salt to make a brine. Stir until the salt is dissolved.
- Divide the peppercorns and red pepper flakes equally between the sterilized jars. Add the carrots, packing them in as evenly as possible and leaving slightly more than 1 inch (2.5 cm) of headspace at the top of the jar.
- Pour the brine over the vegetables, leaving 1 inch (2.5 cm) of headspace again. You may have some brine left over. Top the

carrots with a fermenting weight (see page 339) to keep them submerged.

- Close the jars with an airlock, pickle pipe, or clean kitchen towel and fasten gently with a jar ring. Place jars on a rimmed plate or baking sheet to catch any liquid that may escape. Leave the carrots to ferment at room temperature for 5–10 days. The liquid will likely turn cloudy as the carrots start fermenting and you'll see some small bubbles. This is normal.
- Once the initial fermentation period is over (it is over when you decide you like how they taste), these are ready to enjoy. To determine when they are done, remove the lid after 5 days, take one out with a clean fork, and taste it. If you want a more pickled flavour, replace the fermenting lid and wait a few more days before tasting again. When you're happy with the taste, top the jars with a regular canning lid and move them to your refrigerator or other cold storage (35°F–40°F/2°C–5°C).

Cook's notes

These will last 3–6 months if stored properly. Harder vegetables tend to last longer than softer vegetables. Once you start enjoying a jar, keep it in your refrigerator, with the lid on. It will still last for months this way, though the texture of the vegetables will slowly continue to soften.

Fermented Rainbow Slaw

Makes 2 (4-cup/1 L) jars

This recipe can be multiplied easily by using 2 tablespoons (30 ml) kosher salt for every 4 cups (1 L) of filtered water. A food processor with a grating tool makes quick work of shredding all the vegetables and apple.

6 cups (1.5 L) filtered water (see Cook's note)
3 Tbsp (45 ml) kosher salt
2 Tbsp (30 ml) yellow mustard seeds, divided
2 tsp (10 ml) caraway seeds, divided 1 tsp (5 ml) peppercorns, divided
4 cups (1 L) shredded green cabbage
1 cup (250 ml) peeled, shredded carrots
1 cup (250 ml) cored, shredded, unpeeled red apple

- Sterilize two (4-cup/1 L) jars (see page 339).
- In a large bowl, mix the water with the salt and stir until the salt has dissolved.
- Place half the mustard seeds, caraway seeds, and peppercorns in each sterilized jar. Pack the shredded veggies and apple on top of them as evenly as possible, leaving slightly more than 1 inch (2.5 cm) of headspace at the top of the jar.
- Pour the brine over the veggies, leaving 1 inch (2.5 cm) of headspace again. You may have some brine left over. Top the veggies with a fermenting weight (see page 339) to keep them submerged.
- Close the jars with an airlock, pickle pipe, or paper towel and fasten gently with a jar ring. Place jars on a rimmed plate or baking sheet to catch any liquid that may escape. Leave the slaw to ferment at room temperature for 7–10 days. The liquid in

the jars will likely turn cloudy as the slaw starts fermenting and you'll see some small bubbles will occasionally be rising. This is normal.

- Once the initial fermentation period is over (it is over when you decide you like how they taste), it is ready to enjoy. To determine when they are done, remove the lid after 5 days, take one out with a clean fork, and taste it. If you want a more pickled flavour, replace the fermenting lid and wait a few more days before tasting again. When you're happy with the taste, top the jars with a regular canning lid and move them to your refrigerator or other cold storage (35°F–40°F/2°C–5°C).
- Kept in the refrigerator, this will keep easily for 3 months or longer. In cold storage, you should plan to use it within 3 months. Usually this won't actually go "bad" but will lose the crispness and bright colour if left longer.

Cook's notes

If you're on city water, use water that's been boiled for 20 minutes and then cooled to room temperature.

Fermented Garlic Honey

Makes 1 pint (500 ml)

This is a really easy recipe that is not only tasty in sauces and marinades but also full of all the healthy benefits of garlic, honey, and the resulting probiotics. Be sure to use firm, unblemished garlic cloves for best results. This recipe multiplies easily.

1½ cups (375 ml) peeled garlic cloves
1 cup (250 ml) honey

- Sterilize a 1-pint (500 ml) jar (see page 339). Place the garlic cloves in the jar and pour the honey over it until the jar is full, or at least fully covers the garlic with no air pockets.
- Close the jar with an airlock lid, pickle pipe, or secured paper towel to allow the fermentation gases to escape.
- Place the jar on a plate in a cool, dark place to ferment. Shake or invert (stir if you have a paper towel lid) daily for the first week to prevent mould. Be sure to tighten the lid before shaking.
- You may see bubbles after a few days and the honey will thin over time. This is normal.
- The fermented garlic and honey will be ready in about 1 month but can be enjoyed in as little as 2 weeks or left for up to 6 months. To determine when they are done, remove the lid after 5 days, take one out with a clean fork, and taste it.
- Unlike fermented vegetables, fermented garlic in honey is better stored in a cool, dark place like a pantry, around 42°F–64°F (6°C–18°C). It will darken over time and the garlic may turn slightly blue or green but that is fine.

Freezing

Freezer Tomato Sauce

Freezer Basil Mint Pesto

Frozen Wild Mushrooms

If you have sufficient storage space, the easiest preservation method is freezing. Excess broccoli, cauliflower, peas, beans, berries, stone fruit, rhubarb, and more can be cleaned, dried, chopped into uniform pieces, and then spread on a baking sheet to freeze before packing in resealable bags or freezer containers.

Freezing can buy time too. If you don't have time to make jam or jelly in the summer, freeze the fruit or fruit juice and do it when you have time.

Pesto and chimichurri made with summer basil, arugula, oregano, cilantro, garlic, and olive oil can be portioned into ice-cube trays and frozen. They're perfect for quick dinner solutions throughout the year.

Always label everything. You might think you'll remember what each container holds, but when you have three containers of puréed green stuff, will you be able to tell the difference between pesto, salsa verde, and spinach?

The recipes I've included are the ones I use most at home, starting with a versatile tomato sauce that we use in everything from pasta to chili to pizza and more. Second, pesto is a valuable commodity in our house. We use it so much on crostini and in pasta that stocking up in the summer saves us lots of money. The third is frozen wild mushrooms. Foraging for mushrooms in peaceful, mossy forests in the fall is one of my favourite activities. After a day in the forest, I clean and cook them to eat right away, and to freeze for later use in risotto, soup, and stew and on steak. With the exception of pine

mushrooms, most mushrooms benefit from cooking out the excess water and storing in sealed bags or containers.

FREEZING FRUITS AND VEGGIES 101

Some crops freeze better than others and some need a little extra processing for the best results. Here is a list of a few of my favourite fruit and vegetables for freezing and some tips on freezing for best results.

Bell peppers: Can be frozen almost whole, which works well if you're going to use them in soups and dips where they will later be puréed. Just cut out the stem and seeds first. Otherwise, deseed and chop them so they are ready to add to a cooked dish right from the freezer.

Berries: Can be frozen raw. Spread them on rimmed baking sheets and then transfer to freezer containers or bags once frozen. They're easy to measure out as much as you need whenever you want them.

Corn: Corn on the cob can be husked and placed in sealed bags, then frozen. Alternatively, to freeze just the kernels, slice them off the cob, place them on a parchment-lined rimmed baking tray, and freeze before transferring them to a bag or airtight container (this helps the kernels stay separate). Corn can be frozen from raw or blanched and cooled first. It's up to you.

Pine mushrooms: Can be frozen raw. Most mushrooms keep better if they're cooked before freezing (see frozen wild mushrooms, page 348) so they stay firm, but the taste and texture of pine mushrooms keep very well when the mushrooms are thinly sliced and stored in freezer bags with the air removed.

Stone fruits: Cut them in half and remove their pits. Leave them halved or chopinto the size you like and freeze.

Tomatoes: Can be frozen completely whole, but I like to cut out the top stem first. Leaving them otherwise intact, place them in airtight containers or freezer bags and freeze until you need them. If you need peeled tomatoes for a cooked dish, let the frozen tomatoes thaw and their skins will slide right off.

Zucchini: Is best grated and measured into 1- or 2-cup (250 ml or 500 ml) portions before being placed in a freezer-safe bag. Press all the air out and freeze until needed.

Many other veggies are best blanched for 1–3 minutes before draining well, freezing on trays and then transferring to airtight containers or freezer bags. Beans, broccoli, cauliflower, peas, and winter squash will all taste fresher and have a better texture if you blanch them before freezing. Cut them into bite-sized pieces or the size you will want when using them.

Some vegetables just don't freeze well. Cucumber and lettuce are just two examples. The texture of fruit and vegetables that have been frozen tends to be softer so freeze things that you will use in smoothies or baked goods, soup, or other cooked dishes.

Herbs can work well frozen. Just be aware that the texture will not be the same, so they are better used in purées, sauces, and cooked dishes. Parsley, chives, dill, and cilantro can be put straight into a freezer-safe bag and frozen. Scrunch the bag briefly with your fist to crumble the frozen herbs. Strip the leaves off the stems of woody herbs once they are frozen.

Basil is the outlier because it turns brown easily. It works best finely chopped or puréed, packed into ice-cube trays, and topped with olive oil. Freeze it as soon as it's been prepped in this way.

Cilantro
Basil

Freezer Tomato Sauce

Makes 4 cups (1 L)

This simple, rustic sauce takes a lot of tomatoes but it's so much better than store-bought if you've got garden-fresh tomatoes. I like to pulse my tomatoes in a food processor before cooking rather than chop them by hand. This helps break up the skins better so I don't have to pass the sauce through a food mill, although you can do that if you prefer.

Freeze some sauce in 2-cup (500 ml) portions for spaghetti and other pasta sauces and some in 1-cup (250 ml) portions for pizza, chili, and other recipes. This recipe doubles easily.

3 Tbsp (45 ml) olive oil
2 cups (500 ml) finely diced sweet onion
4 cloves garlic, minced
½ tsp (2.5 ml) anise seed
¼ tsp (1 ml) red pepper flakes
1 fresh or dried bay leaf
1 cup (250 ml) shredded, packed basil
5 lb (2.5 kg) cored and chopped fresh tomatoes (about 12 cups/3 L)
1 Tbsp (15 ml) honey
1 tsp (5 ml) sea salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground black pepper

- Place the oil in a large, wide saucepan or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the onions and fry, stirring frequently, until they are translucent, about 6 minutes. Stir in the garlic, anise, red pepper flakes, and bay leaf and continue to fry until the garlic is soft and fragrant.
- Add the basil and stir, then add the tomatoes and stir again. Bring the sauce to a boil and then reduce the heat to medium-

low to keep it at a simmer, stirring frequently, especially as the sauce gets thicker. Continue to cook, stirring frequently, until the sauce has reduced by two-thirds, about 1 hour. Remove from the heat, let cool, and then pack into freezer bags, lidded jars, or other freezer-safe containers, leaving ½ inch (1.25 cm) headspace to allow for expansion. Freeze for up to 6 months.

Freezer Basil Mint Pesto

Makes 1¼ cups (310 ml) or 5 (¼-cup/60 ml) jars

Pesto is very versatile. Load it up with classic basil or make it with mint, cilantro, parsley, or even greens like kale or arugula. Use classic pine nuts or swap in local nuts or creamy cashews. Use parmesan cheese or keep it vegan with sea salt or nutritional yeast. You get the idea. Plain herbs chopped and mixed with olive oil can be frozen the same way.

½ cup (125 ml) hazelnuts
2–3 cloves garlic
½ tsp (2.5 ml) sea salt
1 cup (250 ml) packed basil
1 cup (250 ml) packed mint
½ cup (125 ml) olive oil
Ground black pepper

- Using a food processor fitted with a steel blade, pulse the nuts, garlic, and salt until very fine. (You can use a mortar and pestle, if you prefer.) Add the herbs ½ cup (125 ml) at a time, pulsing until they are finely chopped. Once all the herbs are added, drizzle in the olive oil while running the food processor until the mixture has your desired consistency. It should be thick but easily spreadable, so add more or less oil as needed. Season with extra salt and pepper to taste.
- Pack the pesto into ice-cube trays and freeze. Pop the frozen pesto cubes out of the trays and into airtight containers or freezer bags. Alternatively, freeze the pesto in small airtight containers, topped with a skim of olive oil to prevent oxidation. These will keep well in the freezer for 3–6 months.

Frozen Wild Mushrooms

Makes about 2 cups (500 ml)

I've spent many an evening in the fall cooking batch after batch of sautéed mushrooms for the freezer, and I keep doing it because I know how happy I am every time I pull out another package of chanterelles in the middle of winter.

Chanterelles, boletes, lobsters, cauliflower mushrooms, oyster mushrooms, and more keep very well this way. In fact, after a fresh sauté in butter, the chanterelles taste as if they were cooked from fresh. I like to do some batches of larger pieces or whole button mushrooms just for serving with a grilled steak or on top of risotto. I do other batches smaller for soups and stews

¼ cup (60 ml) butter or olive oil, plus more for storing
4 cups (1 L) wild mushrooms, sliced or whole if small
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
1 clove garlic, minced (optional)

- Heat a large frying pan over medium heat and add the butter. Once it's bubbling, add the mushrooms and salt. Fry, stirring occasionally, until they release their liquid and it evaporates. This time will vary depending how much moisture the mushrooms have. Continue to cook until the mushrooms start to brown just a little. Add the garlic, if you're using it, and cook, stirring, for 1–2 more minutes.
- Remove the mushrooms from the heat and let them cool for 20–30 minutes. Pack them into freezer bags, removing the air as you seal them, or into freezer containers, topped with a skim of extra melted butter or olive oil to keep the air off them.

- These will keep well for 6–8 months (but I bet you’ll use them up sooner!)

Jamming

Apricot Thyme Jam

Fig Balsamic Jam

Classic Blackberry Jam

Jam is a great ingredient to have on hand for toast, thumbprint cookies, charcuterie boards, and cheese trays. If you have frozen fruit from the summer, these recipes are the perfect way to use it up. It's also a pretty simple way to use up excess fresh fruits and berries, especially fruits that have their own pectin. I've shared three of my personal favourites that don't need any pectin.

Food safety experts often recommend using bottled lemon juice because its consistent level of acidity makes it ideal for both food safety reasons and for setting the pectin reliably. These recipes do not need additional lemon juice for safe water bath canning and I prefer the flavour of fresh lemon juice, so that is what I use. You can choose whichever you prefer. Be sure to use a heavy-bottomed pot and monitor your jam to prevent burning or scorching and skim off any excess foam to prevent overflows.

A canner is a large, deep pot, often with a fitted wire rack on the bottom that is designed to hold canning jars. If you don't have a canner, you can use any large pot that can fit your jars in with enough room to cover with water and top with the lid. I like to place a small wire rack in the pot under the jars to protect them from banging the bottom while boiling.

Apricot Thyme Jam

Makes 4–5 (½-pint/250 ml) jars

This jam is great with both sweet and savoury items. Most of my family spoon it generously on toast, but I love it with cheese as an after-dinner treat. The thyme adds a nice fragrance to the jam without overpowering it, but leave it on the stem rather than chopping it so it's easy to remove from the jam once it's cooked.

6 cups (1.5 L) pitted and quartered unpeeled apricots
3 cups (750 ml) granulated sugar
3 large sprigs of lemon thyme
Pinch of salt
¼ cup (60 ml) water
2 Tbsp (30 ml) lemon juice

- In a large pot, combine the apricots, sugar, thyme, salt, and water. Let everything come to a low boil over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until the apricots have released their juices and the sugar has dissolved, about 10–15 minutes.
- Add the lemon juice and continue to cook the mixture, stirring frequently, until it coats the back of a spoon, about 30 minutes. Test for a thick consistency with a scant teaspoon (5 ml) of jam dripped onto a cold plate. If it gels and you like the thickness, remove it from the heat. If it isn't thick enough, continue to cook, testing it every 10 minutes.
- Remove the pot from the heat. Let the jam cool slightly and remove the thyme carefully with a fork before transferring the jam to sterilized jars and topping with sterilized lids (see below for sterilizing instructions). Refrigerate the jam for up to 3 months or follow the canning technique below for shelf-stable

jars that will stay good for a year or longer. Once opened, jam will last up to 3 months if kept clean and uncontaminated.

Sterilizing jars and hot water canning

- Wash your jars and lids with soapy water, rinse and place the jars in a canner, cover with water, and bring to a simmer over medium heat for 10 minutes. Read the lids' packaging and put them in a separate pot of hot water if required.
- When you're ready to fill the sterilized jars, lift them out of the hot water with tongs, empty them, and place on a tea towel. Place the lid on the canner and keep the water at a good simmer. Ladle the hot jam into the hot jars using a wide-mouth funnel, leaving ½ inch (1.25 cm) of headspace.
- Wipe the rims and threads of each jar with a clean, damp cloth. Place a new lid on each jar and screw the bands down evenly until just barely tight.
- Place the jars back in the hot water in the canner and make sure they are fully submerged. Put the lid on the canner, increase the heat to high, and bring the water back to a boil. Once the water comes to a rolling boil, set a timer for 10 minutes.
- After 10 minutes, turn off the heat and remove the canner lid. Let the water cool for 5 minutes, then use tongs to remove the jars and set them on a dry towel or rack. Let the jars cool for 12–24 hours.
- Once cool, check the lids for a good vacuum seal by pressing on the centre of each one. The lids should be slightly concave and should not pop down or up when pressed. If any do not seal (which sometimes happens if the jar rim wasn't perfectly clean), store them in your refrigerator and use them first.
- Label and store jars in a cool, dry, dark place for up to a year. Once opened, jam will keep for up to 3 months.

Fig Balsamic Jam

Makes 6 (½-pint/250 ml) jars

Rich fig balsamic jam is sweet, tangy, and deeply flavourful, with a chunky texture. The balsamic vinegar gently cuts through the acidity while still letting the fig flavour shine through. This pairs beautifully with both sweet and savoury dishes. Try it spread on toast, spooned over ice cream, or served alongside cheeses and charcuterie.

8 cups (2 L) quartered fresh figs
4 cups (1 L) granulated sugar
Peel from ½ lemon, white pith removed
¾ tsp (4 ml) salt
½ cup + 1 Tbsp (140 ml) balsamic vinegar, divided
½ cup (125 ml) water

- Sterilize your jars and lids (see page 350).
- In a large, heavy-bottomed pot, mix together the figs, sugar, lemon peel, salt, ½ cup (125 ml) of the balsamic, and the water. Turn the heat to high and bring the mixture to a boil, stirring occasionally. Reduce the heat to medium and cook, still stirring occasionally, until it starts to look thick, about 35 minutes, but note that it will have more of a freezer jam consistency. Add the remaining tablespoon (15 ml) of balsamic and cook for 10 more minutes.
- Test for a thick consistency by dropping a scant teaspoon (5 ml) of jam onto a cold plate. If it gels and you like the thickness, remove it from the heat. If not, continue to cook, testing every 10 minutes.
- Remove the pot from the heat and let the jam cool slightly before transferring it to sterilized jars. Refrigerate the jam for up

to 3 months or follow the instructions on page 350 for hot water canning.

- Label and store jars in a cool, dry, dark place for up to a year. Once opened, jam will keep for up to 3 months.

Classic Blackberry Jam

Makes 4 (½-pint/250 ml) jars

Sometimes it’s best not to mess with a good thing and this jam is one of those things. I’m not sure where our family first got this recipe, but my husband has made it with each of our kids throughout the years and every jar has been enjoyed thoroughly. Blackberries have a great balance of sweet and tart and really need nothing else to bring out the best in them. It’s safe to say this is by far our favourite flavour of jam.

6 cups (1.5 L) blackberries
3 cups (750 ml) granulated sugar
1 Tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice

- Sterilize your jars and lids (see page 350).
- In a large pot, combine the blackberries and sugar over medium heat. Bring to a low boil, stirring occasionally, until the berries have released their juices and the sugar has dissolved, about 10–15 minutes.
- Add the lemon juice and continue to cook the mixture, stirring frequently, until well thickened, about 30 minutes. Test the consistency by dropping a scant teaspoon (5 ml) of jam onto a cold plate. If it gels and you like the thickness, remove it from the heat. If not, continue cooking, testing every 10 minutes.
- Remove the pot from the heat and let the jam cool slightly before transferring it to sterilized jars. Refrigerate the jam for up to 3 months or follow the instructions on page 350 for hot water canning.
- Label and store jars in a cool, dry, dark place for up to a year. Once opened, the jam will keep for up to 3 months.

Pickling

Garlic Sesame Pickled Mushrooms

Pickled Onions: Quick or Canned

Pickled Rhubarb

Pickled Nasturtium Seeds

Pickling can be done by using a strong vinegar mixture or by brining and fermenting. All it takes to make a batch of quick pickles is a jar, uniformly sized vegetables, and vinegar. Add herbs or spices to taste and refrigerate for a week. Pickles made this way can be canned to keep through the year. Go beyond pickled cucumbers by making your own spicy pickled beans, carrots, garlic, and more.

I'll admit that I mostly do quick pickles like the pickled onions I've included here. I like how crisp and fresh they are, but I find pickled mushrooms and rhubarb are worth the extra effort because they are only available for part of the year and they are so delicious, elevating the simplest of meals with their big flavour. The tarragon nasturtium seeds are fun too, because they are a little bit different. They will get your guests talking when you pop them into dishes in place of regular capers.

Garlic Sesame Pickled Mushrooms

Makes 4 (1-pint/500 ml) jars

This is a tasty way to preserve wild mushrooms. It works well for chanterelles (my favourite), hedgehogs, and boletes. In fact, it works with pretty much any firm wild mushrooms. You can also use store-bought button or oyster mushrooms. I've given an estimate for the amount of fresh mushrooms you'll need, but it will vary depending how much moisture they have. You want to end up with 6–8 cups (1.5–2 L) of cooked mushrooms.

3 Tbsp (45 ml) olive oil, divided
4 lb (1.8 kg) chanterelle mushrooms, cleaned and sliced into bite-sized pieces, divided
1 tsp (5 ml) sesame oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tsp (5 ml) grated ginger
½ tsp (2.5 ml) red pepper flakes
1 Tbsp (15 ml) granulated sugar
1 Tbsp (15 ml) peppercorns
2 tsp (10 ml) pickling salt
2 cups (500 ml) rice wine vinegar
2 cups (500 ml) water

- Sterilize your jars and lids (see page 350).
- In a large frying pan over medium heat, warm 1 tablespoon (15 ml) olive oil and add half the sliced mushrooms. Fry until they have released and reabsorbed all their liquid. Remove from the frying pan and set aside. Repeat with another 1 tablespoon (15 ml) olive oil and the remaining mushrooms. Add the first batch of mushrooms to the pan and keep warm over low heat until you're ready to pack your jars.

- Fill a large pot or canner half full with water and set to high heat.
- In a medium-sized pot over medium heat, warm the remaining 1 tablespoon (15 ml) of olive oil and the sesame oil. Add the garlic, ginger, and red pepper flakes. Fry just until translucent, about 1–2 minutes, then add the sugar, peppercorns, salt, vinegar, and water. Stir to combine and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low and keep at a simmer while you pack the jars.
- Divide the warm mushrooms between the hot jars, leaving ½ inch (1.25 cm) of headspace. Pour in the hot pickling liquid until it comes just slightly above the mushrooms, then wipe the rims with a clean damp cloth and top with sterilized canning lids. Screw on the lid bands and place in the water canner. Place the lid on, bring the water back to a boil over high, and once boiling, set the timer for 10 minutes. Turn off the heat and let cool for 5 minutes. Remove the jars from the canner and set them on a dry towel or rack. Let the jars cool for 12–24 hours.
- Once cool, check the lids for a good vacuum seal by pressing on the centre of each. The lids should be slightly concave and when pressed, they should not pop down or up. If any do not seal (which sometimes happens if the jar rim wasn't perfectly clean), store them in your refrigerator and use them first.
- Canned pickled mushrooms will keep well in a cool, dark place for up to a year. Once opened, they will keep for 2 months, stored in the refrigerator.

Cook's note

If you use small button mushrooms, you can leave them whole.

Pickled Onions: Quick or Canned

Makes 4 (1-pint/500 ml) jars

Pickled onions have a way of making almost any meal pop. I particularly love them on salads, in tacos and sandwiches, and with grilled meats. This recipe is a basic starting point, but feel free to change up the herbs, spices, or type of vinegar. Use any onions you like; I usually choose red for their pretty colour.

4 cups (1 L) red wine vinegar
3 Tbsp (45 ml) pickling spice or 6 sprigs of fresh thyme
7 cups (1.75 L) sliced red onions (about 6–7 medium-sized onions)

- Sterilize your jars and lids (see page 350).
- In a large saucepan, combine the vinegar and the pickling spice or thyme, if using.
- Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat. Add the sliced onions, stir, and bring back to a boil for 5 minutes.
- Using a slotted spoon, remove the onions from the cooking liquid and pack them into the sterilized jars. Pour the hot pickling liquid into the jars to cover the onions, leaving ½ inch (1.25 cm) of space below the rims. Centre the lids on the jars and screw on the rings until they are fingertip tight.
- For quick pickles, just let the jars cool on the counter and then put them in the refrigerator.
- For canned pickles, wipe the rims with a clean damp cloth and top with sterilized canning lids. Screw the lid bands on and place the jars in the water canner. Place the lid on, bring the water back to a boil over high, and, once it’s boiling, set the timer for 10 minutes. Turn off the heat and let the water cool for 5 minutes. Place the jars on a dry towel or rack. Let them cool for 12–24 hours.
- Once cool, check the lids for a good vacuum seal by pressing on the centre of each one. The lids should be slightly concave and when pressed, they should not pop down or up. If any do not seal (which sometimes happens if the jar rim wasn’t

perfectly clean), store them in your refrigerator and use them first.

- Canned pickled onions will keep well in a cool, dark place for up to a year. Once opened, they will keep for 2 weeks in the refrigerator.

Pickled Rhubarb

Makes 4 (1-pint/500 ml) jars

This well-spiced condiment makes a delicious sweet-tart pairing with hard cheese, nuts, or grilled pork or chicken. The rhubarb will lose much of its vibrant colour during the pickling process but it keeps its delicious tangy flavour.

4 cups (1 L) white vinegar
3 cups (750 ml) granulated sugar
1 × 2-inch (5 cm) piece fresh ginger, peeled
2 Tbsp (30 ml) yellow mustard seeds
2 Tbsp (30 ml) whole black peppercorns
1 tsp (5 ml) ground allspice
1 tsp (5 ml) whole cloves
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
½ tsp (5 ml) red pepper flakes
6 cups (1.5 L) 1-inch (2.5 cm) diagonally sliced rhubarb

- Sterilize your jars and lids (see page 350).
- Place the vinegar in a large saucepan. Add the sugar, ginger, mustard seeds, peppercorns, allspice, cloves, salt, and red pepper flakes.
- Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring until the sugar dissolves.
- Reduce the heat and let the mixture simmer for an additional 5 minutes to let it reduce slightly and allow the flavours of the spices to infuse everything. Remove and discard the piece of ginger and stir in the rhubarb. Bring back to a boil and then turn off the heat. Remove the rhubarb with a slotted spoon and pack it into the sterilized jars.

- Pour the hot pickling liquid into the jars, leaving ½ inch (1.25 cm) of space below the rims.
- Wipe the rims with a clean damp cloth and top with sterilized canning lids. Screw the lid bands on and place in the water canner. Place the lid on, bring the water back to a boil over high, and, once boiling, set the timer for 10 minutes. Turn off the heat and let it cool for 5 minutes, then remove the jars and set them on a dry towel or rack. Let the jars cool for 12–24 hours.
- Once cool, check lids for a good vacuum seal by pressing on the centre of each. The lids should be slightly concave and when pressed, they should not pop down or up. If any do not seal (which sometimes happens if the jar rim wasn't perfectly clean), store them in your refrigerator and use them first.
- Canned pickled rhubarb will keep well in a cool, dark place for up to a year. Once opened, it will keep for 1 month in the refrigerator.

Pickled Nasturtium Seeds

Makes 1 (1-pint/500 ml) jar

Pickled nasturtium seeds are also known as nasturtium capers. They're similar to commercial capers, but more peppery, larger, and a bit firmer—perhaps because the two are from different plants. They can be substituted in place of capers in almost anything, but you'll need fewer of them for the same big hit of flavour.

1 cup (250 ml) white wine vinegar
1 large sprig of tarragon
1 fresh or dried bay leaf
1 tsp (5 ml) kosher salt, or to taste
½ tsp (2.5 ml) black peppercorns
1½ cups (375 ml) fresh green nasturtium seeds

- Sterilize your jar and lid (see page 350).
- Place the vinegar in a small pot and add the tarragon, bay leaf, salt, peppercorns, and nasturtium seeds. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Spoon the nasturtium seeds and peppercorns into the sterilized jar. Pour in hot vinegar mixture to cover them, leaving ½ inch (1.25 cm) of headspace.
- Place the lid on the jar and refrigerate for at least 2 weeks before using. Keep them in the refrigerator and spoon them out as you need them. If you always use a clean spoon, they will last up to 3 months.

Mustard, Vinegar, Salt + Sugar

Grainy Beer Mustard

Summer Berry Vinegar

Herbed Salt and Sugar

ROSEMARY THYME SALT

LAVENDER SUGAR

FIR TIP SUGAR

These recipes are the miscellaneous workhorses in my kitchen. By making these at home, you get to customize so they're exactly how you like them. The mustard in the recipe is a mild-medium spice level with a great balance of sweet and savoury, but give it more kick if that's how you like it. Infusing vinegar with summer fruit is a great way to brighten up salads all through the year and to add a splash of flavour to plain soda. Flavoured salts and sugars are delicious in baking, for cocktail rims, and for seasoning finished fish and meat. My most used sugar is lavender. It is tasty in cookies and adds unique and unexpected flavour to whipped cream or tea. All these recipes make wonderful homemade gifts to share with family and friends.

Grainy Beer Mustard

Makes 3 cups (750 ml)

This is a fantastic and easy condiment for burgers, hot dogs, and rillettes (page 277). It's also a fun project for kids! Feel free to use non-alcoholic beer if you like, but make sure it's one you love, because it's a main ingredient in this mustard. Yellow mustard seeds are mild and the brown ones are spicy, so adjust the ratio as you like.

¾ cup (185 ml) yellow mustard seeds
¼ cup (60 ml) brown mustard seeds
1 cup (250 ml) dark ale (or your favourite local beer)
1 cup (250 ml) apple cider vinegar
2 Tbsp (30 ml) brown sugar
2 tsp (10 ml) salt

- In a 1-quart (1 L) jar or airtight container, add the mustard seeds, followed by the beer. Place the lid on, give everything a good shake and place in the refrigerator for at least 12 hours, or up to 24 hours.
- In another jar, combine the vinegar with the sugar and salt. Put the lid on the jar, shake until the sugar and salt are dissolved, then pour the mixture into the mustard seed mixture. Shake up the ingredients and transfer to a blender or food processor fitted with a steel blade. Process just until the mixture is creamy but still has lots of whole mustard seeds showing, 30–60 seconds.
- Scrape the mixture back into the jar you chilled the mustard seeds in, cover with a lid, and refrigerate. This mustard will keep indefinitely in the refrigerator as long as you use a clean spoon

each time you dip into it. Note that this is best made at least 1 day ahead to let the flavours develop.

Gardener’s note

Did you know you can grow and harvest your own mustard seeds? We often enjoy mustard greens but don’t bother with saving their seeds. Mustard grows well on the West Coast and all you need to do is grow the plants, let them go to seed, and let the seeds dry in their pods. Once they’re dry with brittle pods, harvest them by cracking open the little pods and emptying them into a bowl. There are many kinds of mustard, so choose a flavour and spice level that suits your tastes. White (also known as yellow) mustard seeds are the mildest with brown tending to be medium and black seeds being very spicy.

Summer Berry Vinegar

Makes 2 cups (500 ml)

You can make this recipe with pretty much any fruit or herbs. If I'm using fruit, I use fruity apple cider vinegar; if I'm using herbs, I like to use red or white wine vinegar for its more neutral flavour.

1 cup (250 ml) fresh berries
1¾ cups (435 ml) apple cider vinegar

- In a small bowl, mash the berries with a potato masher, pour the vinegar over them, and stir. Place the mixture in an airtight jar, cover it with a lid, and put it in the refrigerator for a week. Strain out the solids through a fine mesh sieve and place the vinegar in a clean bottle or jar. Stored in your refrigerator, this will last indefinitely.

Cook's notes

If you want to keep your vinegar very clear, don't press on the solids when straining. Just be patient and let gravity do the work.

Some people like to add sugar to their berry vinegar, but I prefer to wait and add sugar if needed in a recipe, which makes the vinegar more versatile. (See the strawberry rose shrub recipe on page 67 for a sweet fruit vinegar.)

Herbed Salt and Sugar

[Rosemary Thyme Salt]

[Lavender Sugar]

[Fir Tip Sugar]

I bet you've seen herbed salt and sugar for sale at farmers' markets or boutique grocery stores. And I also bet you were shocked at the price they command. Luckily, they're quick, easy, and inexpensive to make at home. They keep well for a long time and are ideal for adding flavour to cookies and crackers, making cocktail rims, and using as a finishing salt on vegetables, meat, and seafood.

You can make flavoured salt or sugar from any of your favourite herbs, although basil tends to brown quickly and not look as appealing. Use sugar when you want to use the herb in baking or beverages and use salt when you want to use the herb in savoury applications like seasoning meat or vegetables. I use a small food processor for this, but if you don't have one, grind your herbs with a mortar and pestle or chop them finely by hand and then mix them into the salt or sugar. The main thing to remember is to let your herbs dry completely before packing the salt or sugar into containers to store.

Here are a few recipes to get you started (including one that uses fir tips!).

Rosemary Thyme Salt

Makes 1 cup (250 ml)

¾ cup (185 ml) coarse or flaky sea salt (for a finishing salt, use the flaky salt), divided
¼ cup (60 ml) rosemary leaves
¼ cup (60 ml) thyme leaves
1 Tbsp (15 ml) lemon balm

- Place ½ cup (125 ml) of the salt in a small food processor along with the rosemary, thyme, and lemon balm. Pulse until the herbs are chopped into small bits evenly through the salt. Add the remaining salt and pulse just two to three more times to blend.
- Pour the mixture onto a baking sheet and spread it out evenly. Let it dry completely, 12–24 hours, then store in airtight glass containers.

Lavender Sugar

Makes 2 cups (500 ml)

2 cups (500 ml) granulated sugar, divided
2 Tbsp (30 ml) lavender buds or leaves
1 Tbsp (15 ml) grated lemon zest

- Place ½ cup (125 ml) of the sugar in a small food processor fitted with a steel blade. Add the lavender and lemon zest and pulse until the lavender is chopped into small bits and evenly distributed through the sugar. Add the rest of the sugar and pulse a few more times until mixed. Pour the mixture onto a

baking sheet and spread it out evenly. Let it dry completely, 12–24 hours, then store in airtight glass containers.

Fir Tip Sugar

Makes 2 cups (500 ml)

2 cups (500 ml) granulated sugar, divided
¼ cup (60 ml) young fir tips

- Place ½ cup (125 ml) of the sugar in a small food processor fitted with a steel blade. Add the fir tips and pulse until the fir tips are chopped into small bits and evenly distributed through the sugar. Add the rest of the sugar and pulse a few more times until mixed. Pour the mixture onto a baking sheet and spread it out evenly. Let it dry completely, 12–24 hours, then store in airtight glass containers.

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“*West Coast Kitchen Garden* is a gorgeous, generous book that captures the spirit of West Coast living. With beautiful photography and a seamless mix of gardening guidance and kitchen inspiration, Sabrina Currie shows how deeply rewarding it is to cook with what’s growing around you. . . . From foraging and preserving to thoughtful ways of bringing the garden to the table, every page reⒿects her connection to this region’s bounty. I love how it makes you want to dig in, harvest something fresh, and share it with friends.” **—Elizabeth Nyland, editor of *Edible Vancouver Island***

“In *West Coast Kitchen Garden*, Sabrina Currie captures just what makes this place so magical—and delicious, too. With gorgeous photos, mouthwatering recipes, and helpful how-tos, she dishes up everything we need to get our food from seed to garden to table, helping us to eat locally and with the seasons. It’s a beautiful book for sure, but what makes it so compelling is her own hard-won experience—we know we’re in good hands here, and I can’t wait to start using her advice in my own kitchen garden” **—Joanne Sasvari, editor-in-chief of Page One Publishing and author of *Island Eats***

“What I love most about *West Coast Kitchen Garden* is how Sabrina bridges the gap between

garden and table. She doesn't just tell you to eat seasonally—she shows you how, with recipes that make you excited about what's actually ready to harvest. From her culinary training to her years of garden trial-and-error, she brings both technical skill and hard-won wisdom to every page. Ⓓank you, Sabrina, for bringing us along on your journey." **—Dawn Postnikoff, co-founder of *Edible Vancouver Island* and co-author of *Island Eats Cookbook***

"Sabrina Currie invites us into her West Coast garden with a book that's equal parts cookbook and gardening guide. Knowledgeable and deeply inspiring, she teaches us not just what (and when) to grow, forage, and harvest, but how to cook and preserve it all beautifully. Ⓓe photos are stunning, the advice thoughtful, and it makes me want to drop what I'm doing and get started on my dream garden" **—Rebecca Wellman, author of *First, We Brunch* and co-author of *Bisous & Brioche* and *Crust***

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